

dominican monastic search

A Spiritual and Theological Review of Dominican Monastic Life



Volume 20, 2002-03

**The 'Prehistory' of the Perpetual Rosary Sisters
As Seen in the Correspondence between Frs. Saintourens and Ligiez**
by Sr. Barbara Estelle, O.P.

Preachers of the Silent Word in a New Century
by Sr. Mary Catharine, O.P.

**The River That Gives Joy to God's City:
Scriptural Reflections on Dominican Contemplative Life and Prayer**
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Discovering Aquinas by Aidan Nichols, O.P., A Book Review-Essay
by Sr. Thomas Mary O.P.



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Articles for publication and general correspondence should be sent to:

Sr. Judith Miryam, O.P.
Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary
543 Springfield Avenue
Summit, NJ 07901-4498

Donations and additions/changes for the mailing list should be sent to Sr. Mary Catharine, O.P. at the same address above. Make checks payable to Conference of Dominican Nuns.

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EDITORIAL

During our community's recent annual retreat, I reflected upon how our Dominican monastic life is not only a wonderful calling but a wonderful privilege as well. Of course, in contemporary parlance, that word, "privilege" may have more negative connotations than positive ones. One dictionary provided an insight by defining privilege as "special enjoyment of a good". Indeed, our "special enjoyment" is of a very special good, Goodness Himself, God. We have drawn near to Him in a very radical way. "Called by God, like Mary, to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to his words (cf. Lk 10, 39) (we) are converted to the Lord withdrawing from the empty preoccupations and illusions of the world" (*Fundamental Constitutions III*). We are privileged to sit near the Source of Life Itself, Jesus Christ, and so much of the vigilance of our life is about staying near to that "Fountain of Truth, that Source of Life, from whom All Goodness flows," (*The Summit Choirbook*, 405) not letting any "empty preoccupations" draw us away. Nowhere in our Constitutions is that vigilance better explicated than in the articles on prayer and study. We are to be "instructed particularly in the Sacred Scriptures, in which (we) can contemplate the mystery of salvation (LCM 101, II), and we "should nourish (our) faith especially on the mystical teaching of the Fathers, as well as of other theologians and authors, *in particular those of the Order*. In the study of St. Thomas let them find their best master..." Our sitting at the feet of Jesus is not a passive listening but an *active* one, not only in the sense of hearing but also in making sure that we are sitting "near" to Him, "close" to Him. The Sacred Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church, and our saintly Dominican brothers and sisters, are our surest guides to a truly Dominican listening, a discerning listening which is designed to not only maintain but also to increase our "proximity" to the Source of Life.

The articles in this issue of *Dominican Monastic Search* show the fruits of such "truly Dominican listening." As the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the first monastery of Dominican nuns nears, our thoughts are also turned to our own beginnings here in the United States, thoughts made particularly poignant now with the closing of our Newark monastery. **Sr. Barbara-Estelle, O.P. (Herne, Belgium)** looks at the correspondence of Fr. Damien-Marie Saintourens, O.P., founder of the Dominican Sisters of the Perpetual Rosary, from which several of our monasteries trace their origins, and examines the evolution of his vision. **Sr. Mary Catharine (Summit)** poses the question, "What does it mean to be a Nun of the Order of Preachers?," reflecting on the implications of our identity as "Preachers of the Silent Word." Fittingly enough, our other contributors steep us further into the streams of Holy Scriptures, beginning with **Sr. Mary Thomas' (Lufkin)** selections of scripture passages (water-themed) to "reinforce our (Dominican) vocation of prayer and penance." **Sr. Mary (Margaret) Emmanuella (Farmington Hills)** shares the first fruits of her discovery in seeking a "Trinitarian complementarity" in the Gospels, engaging us in her reflections on Matthew and Luke (Mark and John to follow). **Sr. Mary Vincent's (Farmington)** short but powerful essay on St. Catherine of Siena's exchange of hearts challenges us, at the heart of the Order, to do the same. "Mandatum" sermons from **Sr. Mary Rose**

(Farmington Hills) and **Sr. David Marie (Elmira)** demonstrate one of the ways we "preach" within the context of our monastic traditions. **Sr. Jude Marie Thaddeus (Elmira)** presents her own "psalm to the psalms" while **Sr. Mary Regina (West Springfield)** translates selections from a French book on the psalms; both contributions reminding us of the rich kaleidoscope of these hymns of sacrifice and praise. From Scripture to commentary, **Sr. Mary of Christ (Los Angeles)** gives a summary of the contribution and controversies surrounding Papias (A.D. 70-155?). Our issue ends with **Sr. Thomas Mary's (North Guilford)** thorough book review of Aidan Nichols' *Discovering Aquinas*, proof that St. Thomas' star is rising again, though it has never set for good Dominicans!

When preparing this editorial, I came across a striking quote which Sr. Thomas Mary shared with me, and which I now share with you. It was found in Mother Mary of Jesus Crucified's (one of the North Guilford foundresses) copy of St. Therese's autobiography.

At the General Chapter of 1946, Pope Pius XII said that we (Dominicans) have the same maternal dignity and office (as Our Blessed Mother)—strange words to use. He said, 'Your life is a mystery—preaching—it is a mystery. It implies so much: it implies that you have conceived in your mind and in your heart the Word of God. There has to be this conception and birth of the word. Within that Spirit Shadowed heart is Christ conceived and out of that heart is born and given to the world.' The pope elaborated that ancient thought. *And it is applied very specially my dear Sisters, to you contemplative daughters of St. Dominic. You must have the Word abiding in your heart. You must be pondering that Word in your heart, and your whole life must be the outcome of that indwelling Word and the Spirit of the Word within you.*

May we nuns continue to especially enjoy our privileged place at the feet of the Master. Again, we welcome the fruit of your pondering and "preaching" of the Word abiding in your heart.

Sr. Judith Miryam, O.P.
(Summit, NJ)
Editor

THE 'PREHISTORY' OF THE PERPETUAL ROSARY SISTERS As Seen in the Correspondence between Frs. Saintourens and Ligiez (A.G.O.P.) and Other Manuscript Sources

Sr. Barbara Estelle Beaumont, OP
Herne, Belgium

Although the cloistered Third Order no longer exists, and there may no longer be monasteries able to ensure the perpetual recitation of the Rosary in the way envisaged back in the 19th century, neither is it true to say that the Perpetual Rosary branch of the Dominican Order has disappeared without trace. There are a number of monasteries throughout the world (Belgium, Kenya, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, U.S.A.) which in some way or other can trace their origins back to Fr. Damien-Marie Saintourens and the Perpetual Rosary Sisters. What is more, they are probably very proud of their heritage. After having marked in 2003 the Year of the Rosary, in which Pope John Paul II has sought to make us more conscious of the value of this prayer, it would seem appropriate to cast a historical glance over the beginnings of this foundation, that played such an important role in the early years of Dominican monastic life in the U.S.A. Much of the story has already been told, both by Fr. Saintourens himself in his autobiographical notebooks, which have circulated in duplicated form in our monasteries, as well as in the book, *History of the Dominican Sisters of the Perpetual Rosary* by Mother Mary Aloysius of Jesus, O.P.¹ However, Fr. Damien-Marie remained very discreet about the difficulties he encountered, and in that he showed himself to be a good religious. Mother Rose de Sainte-Marie Wehrlé was not any more forthcoming; in the Louvain chronicles, in which she wrote her reminiscences, all she says about the prehistory from 1875-80 is: "owing to some insurmountable difficulties, the foundation fell through."² In fact, she may well not have known all of the details herself. With the passage of time, however, it becomes appropriate for the historian to ask what was the exact nature of these "insurmountable difficulties"?

Another interesting point emerges from Fr. Saintourens' correspondence for this same period: at this stage, he never envisaged a foundation of enclosed nuns. It is clear that he thought rather in terms of a congregation of contemplative Third Order sisters, with a strong Rosary apostolate. What happened to change this?

These are the two questions on which this article seeks to shed light, through a close reading of the texts of five letters³ that Fr. Damien-Marie Saintourens wrote to Fr. Vincent Ligiez,⁴ assistant to the Master of the Order at Santa Sabina. This will be supplemented by reference to documents from the monastic archives of Banneux/Louvain, Dinant and Herne. This study will necessarily involve identifying the differences in religious sensibility which meant that the foundation of the Perpetual Rosary Sisters had to be postponed for some five years, and then turned out rather differently from the founder's intention. One should perhaps mention that in 1875, when

he first had the idea for the Perpetual Rosary foundation, Fr. Saintourens had only been a solemnly professed Dominican friar for three years, having been a diocesan priest in the South of France for eight years before entering the Order. This may in part explain some of his superiors' hesitation.

On 18 December 1876 Fr. Saintourens wrote to Fr. Ligiez in Rome:

Most Reverend Father, .

For the last six months I have wanted to write to you, in order to inform you of all that has happened as far as the apostolate of the Perpetual Rosary is concerned... This work was on the point of beginning; the foundresses were counting the days, the house,⁵ the furniture were ready, and three sisters of Mauléon already had their letters of obedience from their bishop; nine postulants were ready to enter. The Father Prior of Lille protested that he wanted different sisters; the Father Provincial thought that financial resources would be diverted towards the sisters and so made formal opposition.⁶ As the foundresses wished to go ahead despite everything, it was thought to discourage them by moving me elsewhere. I was removed from an apostolate that I had organised and sent off to the convent at Le Havre [Normandy], where nothing is done for the Perpetual Rosary, no more than it is in any other of the convents of our province, and I was told that I was to have nothing to do with it. All of this happened in July. I accepted this trial... I did not write to you about it, nor to the Rev. Master General, so as not to give the impression of complaining. Since then, I write from time to time to the Fr. Provincial to reassure him that above all, I seek to be obedient.

If he does not give permission, I will wait for his successor; if his successor refuses, I will wait some more. I am convinced that in our Province of France, where the Fathers are absorbed in their grand preaching and have no time for devotions, as they do in the Province of Lyon, we need Dominican Sisters to take care of the details that ensure the regularity of the hours of guard duty [the roster for recitation of the Perpetual Rosary]. I lay no blame, I merely quote the facts. If for the last thirty years nothing has been done in our convents about this devotion—except for Lille where I was, this is the reason.

I would like the center of activity to be in our convents, the direction, the enrollments, the council meetings, but the sisters

would take care of the detail of the administration, the monthly schedules, notices and the considerable correspondence with the heads of sections (I had 460 of them) in order to have all the slots filled up. Seen in this way, it is a marvellous apostolate, rich in blessings.

It is clear then, that in the first instance, Fr. Saintourens saw the Perpetual Rosary Sisters as the secretarial branch of an apostolate aimed at the whole Catholic population. His purpose was not to set up monasteries where the sisters would simply recite the Rosary inside, and have no involvement in spreading the devotion to the whole of the People of God outside. In fact, Fr. Saintourens himself never used the word "monasteries" at this stage, he spoke always of a "congregation." He wrote again to Fr. Ligiez again on 19 December 1878:

Most Reverend Father

You will not have forgotten that three years ago, in November 1875, I submitted to the Reverend Master General and to yourself the plan for a foundation of Dominican Sisters devoted solely to the Perpetual Rosary, forming a Guard of Honour for the Blessed Virgin, just as the Adoration Réparatrice sisters form the Guard of Honour for the Blessed Sacrament.

In accordance with your advice, I addressed myself to Mauléon, which accepted immediately and enthusiastically to provide an initial group of sisters.

But Fr. Faucillon, our provincial made formal opposition to the foundation, and you know that for having sought out preparatory information and foreseen ways of beginning, my work as director of the Rosary at Lille was destroyed. (Only foreseen, because no commitment had been made.) He sent me a formal precept forbidding me to have anything to do with this foundation or any similar foundation.

I don't quibble about his motives: that the sisters of Mauléon were not popular in the Province of France, that we had enough to do in looking after our own convents...

The plans for the foundation are still suspended. Several people, priests and laity have wanted to try, but did not succeed. They always say that so long as there is not a Dominican Father at the head, it will not succeed....

There had been some suggestion of getting round the difficulties by giving over the project to the Bishop of Evreux in Normandy, but for Fr. Saintourens, this would not solve his problem with obedience to his religious Superiors. He wondered about enlisting the support of the Master of the Order. He rather feared that the project would be taken over by the Dominicans of the Province of Lyon "and I would like to keep it in our Province of France." He said he would like to enjoy the same freedom of action as Father Lataste had when he founded the Dominican Bethany Sisters in 1866: "You know that everybody was up in arms against this project, but that Rev. Fr. Jandel authorised Fr. Lataste to do it, despite all the opposition. Now that it has been going for twelve years, there are a hundred Sisters."

The following year, Fr. Saintourens wrote after Easter that he had just received a fresh refusal from the provincial "who maintains that the spirit of our province is not for such works as this." In another letter of 1879 it is clear that he is beginning to find the waiting very hard. He writes that he does not particularly want to be the founder of the Perpetual Rosary Sisters, that he understands that he does not possess the qualities or virtues necessary in a founder, but that he seeks only to make himself the "humble servant" of the project, but

so long as the formal precept served on me at Lille three years ago, when the sisters from Mauléon were on the point of beginning, is still in force, it seems that I can't even do that. In France we don't have a single community of Dominican Sisters of the contemplative Third Order, not in our province at least. Perpetual Rosary sisters used to exist in Paris [before the French Revolution] under the name of "Our Lady's necklace." The poor postulants are distressed at not being able to begin...I am suffering at having my hands tied in this way.

But things were soon to change: in the summer of 1880, there was a new provincial in France, Fr. Chocarne, who was not as opposed to the Perpetual Rosary plan as his predecessor had been. Things began to look up, and in July, Fr. Saintourens was able to announce to his friend in Rome "who has been encouraging me for five years...The moment has come and after several years of trials and prayers the dear work has begun." But Fr. Saintourens still feared that the provincial council would vote against any foundation that bore his name. He explained to Fr. Ligiez the solution he had hit upon: "It is in Calais, with our teaching sisters that the cradle is to be." Fr. Saintourens' postulants had been there since 20 May. Thus, this first stage of the foundation was made completely independently of the Mauléon nuns. The foundress of the Sacred Heart Dominican Sisters at Calais,⁷ Mère Marie des Anges, had become interested in the project and offered to help. By sheltering the Perpetual Rosary fledglings under the wing of an already existing Dominican congregation, Saintourens' own name need not appear publicly. As he wrote to Fr. Ligiez:

The work is founded but I have no authority or responsibility over it. I have directed to Calais all of my novices, present and future. I have put in touch with Calais all of the persons who had promised financial help. As for me I am nothing, nothing at all. I would hope that the first foundation might be made at Lourdes, opposite the grotto.

Fr. Saintourens was aware that the political situation in France was unstable, and that religious communities might face new threats of expulsion; for this reason he thought that Calais was a good option "in case of violent expulsion, the sisters could reach Dover in two hours." On 16 July 1880, Mère Marie des Anges wrote to Rome herself, asking for blessings for the new work, adding "Fr. Saintourens will explain to you why we, who are Dominican teaching sisters have agreed to take on his work and join to our name of Dominicans of the Sacred Heart that of Dominicans of the Perpetual Rosary."

A first document was published entitled: *Congregation of Dominican Sisters of the Perpetual Rosary, Third Order of St Dominic, Calais, Dominican Convent, 1 rue de l'Etoile*. But in fact this cohabitation of two species of Dominican Sisters proved not to be such a good idea after all. As things turned out, the Perpetual Rosary Sisters spent only a few months on the northern French coast at Calais. On 7 December 1880, Fr. Saintourens wrote to Fr. Ligiez in Rome to inform him of the latest developments:

Most Reverend Father,

For several years now you have shown such kind interest in the apostolate of the Dominican Sisters of the Perpetual Rosary that I must bring you up to date with what has happened to them. The work was begun in Calais six months ago. But Fr. Chocarne, our dear provincial who is well disposed towards it; wanted me to entrust it to another prioress. I needed someone else at the helm and other premises. I suggested to Father Provincial, Mother Rose de Sainte-Marie, who at Mauléon had been designated as first novice mistress for the foundation four years ago, when on your advice, I asked this house to provide the first sisters. He agreed readily. She was making another foundation at Arles.⁸ The climate of the North will suit her better than the South. They agreed to let us have her. Armed with full authorisation from her Archbishop, she has taken on the leadership of the little colony. Having been completely separated from the teaching sisters, they now form a real little community apart, devoted exclusively to the Perpetual Rosary.

It was not easy to find somewhere for them in France, at the moment when religious are being expelled, and sisters are

threatened with expulsion. But our sisters are in safety; Bon-Secours, although on Belgian soil, is closer to Paris than Calais.

Could you tell me what Mother Rose should do to recommend the foundation, to the Master General? The Father Provincial is now well disposed; it was on his say-so that I completely separated the affair from Calais....

There are various accounts of the exact course of events: whether Mère Rose de Sainte-Marie travelled alone from Mauléon, first of all to Le Havre to consult with Fr. Saintourens, and then to Bon-Secours; whether she was accompanied as far as Péruwelz by her prioress and met up with Fr. Saintourens at Bon-Secours; or whether she was accompanied by one or two other sisters of Mauléon. This point illustrates that accounts of events written down some time later, even by those who were present or the protagonists themselves, can be inaccurate in some details.

The sisters from Calais had been escorted to Bon-Secours by Mère Marie des Anges, who had planned to stay until Mère Rose arrived, but in fact she was called back urgently to her own community, and so the two 'foundresses' of the Perpetual Rosary Sisters never met. When she saw the reality at Bon-Secours, a few sisters in an ordinary house, with no possibility for the full Divine Office (especially Matins at midnight) or for strict enclosure, great lack of financial resources, despite the promises made, and plenty of secretarial work for the local branch associations of the Perpetual Rosary apostolate, (Fr. Saintourens bought them a printing-press...) it must all have come as a shock to her.

Quite probably, in his initial enthusiasm for his project, on his visits to Mauléon, Fr. Saintourens had stressed the contemplative dimension of the Perpetual Rosary foundation, being keen to secure the help of the sisters there, but as we have seen from his initial thinking on the subject, and as we shall see in due course from the first drafts of a rule of life for the Sisters, he was not aiming at a fully monastic life, such as Mère Rose had known at Mauléon. She on the other hand had rather supposed she was coming to make a foundation, and would have a completely free hand.

Despite this underlying problem, all went along tolerably enough for a year and a half: Fr. Saintourens had already capitulated on the key points of the 'great office' and enclosure, which Mère Rose referred to in her memoirs as the *sine qua non*. When it became time to formalise the Constitutions, Mère Rose obviously felt she had to make more of a stand. She told Fr. Saintourens that what he envisaged was unacceptable to her, and threatened to leave. He would not give in; for him the foundations of the work had been laid at Calais, and he wished to carry on in the same spirit. In the 1882, according to Mère Rose's recollections

The difficulties had become so serious and the attitude of Fr. Saintourens so incomprehensible, that my Superior (Canon Guillaume, Parish priest of Bon-Secours) ordered me to go to Paris to meet the provincial and ask his advice. This is what I did. At the same time, in order to facilitate matters, I proposed to Father Provincial that he withdraw me from this work, and that I should return to my monastery at Mauléon. He refused vehemently.⁹

And so, history was about to repeat itself for poor Fr. Saintourens: Fr. Chocarne, still provincial, forbade him to have anything more to do with the Perpetual Rosary Sisters! In his autobiographical notebooks, Fr. Damien-Marie simply records that on Holy Thursday 1882 he received a letter informing him that he was no longer to direct the Perpetual Rosary Sisters. Relations would never be quite the same again between Mère Rose and Fr. Saintourens.

Mère Rose now turned once more to her former spiritual director, Fr. Marie-Ambroise Potton, 'the father'¹⁰ of the monastery of Mauléon, author of a commentary on the Constitutions of Dominican Nuns, as well as of the Mauléon custom book. And, as for Fr. Saintourens, his life was on the point of taking an unexpected turn: he was sent to America in 1895 to preach in New Orleans, and, in fact, was to spend the greater part of his remaining years in North America.

Meanwhile, back in Belgium, Fr. Iweins Eeckhoute, director of the Perpetual Rosary,¹¹ was made responsible for the sisters at Bon-Secours. He advised a move, as the potential for recruitment in the backwoods of Bon-Secours was very limited, and the sisters were a long way from a convent of Dominican Friars. Then, in 1883, a foundation was made at Louvain, the big university town where Dominicans had been present since the Middle Ages, and the little house at Bon-Secours was abandoned. Vocations now became plentiful, and plans for building a large, regular monastery were drawn up.

However, on the other side of the Atlantic, Fr. Saintourens had by no means abandoned all thoughts of the Perpetual Rosary Sisters. On the contrary, it was rather a completely new opportunity that presented itself to him. In October 1891, after several attempts, Fr. Damien-Marie got permission from a bishop willing to have Perpetual Rosary Sisters in his diocese. This was to be in Newark, NJ, and a house was found for them at West Hoboken. The same year, Mère Rose agreed to send candidates from Europe for this first Perpetual Rosary foundation in America. One may be surprised at this, given the differences between her and Fr. Saintourens. Her account of things is interesting:

Rev. Fr. Saintourens, seeing that our community in Louvain was flourishing so providentially, and that the Constitutions

had been approved, sought to obtain subjects for America, where he was at that time. I resisted for a long time, remembering the difficulties I had had with him previously, and fearing that our sisters would encounter similar ones. But one day he announced to me that if I did not send him a little colony of sisters immediately, he would found another branch of the Perpetual Rosary. This was the way to force my hand...¹²

Earlier in the same year as the foundation at West Hoboken (April 1891), Mère Rose had had the joy of opening a new monastery in France, to which she was naturally keen to return. Although Fr. Saintourens was no longer in Normandy, she made her foundation at Bonsecours, a Marian shrine near Rouen where he had preached a number of times in the 1870's; so the local people had already heard much about the Perpetual Rosary project.

By decision of the bishop of Malines, Mère Rose was to be no longer prioress of Louvain, because of the frequent absences necessary for a foundress. This appointment unfortunately led to tensions between her and Mère Albert who replaced her and was to remain prioress for over thirty years! Mère Rose now became prioress of Bonsecours, Rouen.

In the quotation above, mention is made of the approval of the Constitutions for the Perpetual Rosary Sisters. After the departure of Fr. Saintourens for America, these were drawn up by Mère Rose according to her own vision, but guided very closely by Fr. Potton.¹³ The result was the volume published in 1889 with the approval of the bishop of Malines. (The earlier documents, drafted by Fr. Saintourens, had been submitted to the diocese of Tournai, in which Bon-Secours is situated.)

Although initial statutes were published from Calais and later from Tournai, the Perpetual Rosary foundation was never canonically erected as a congregation. There are considerable differences between the early drafts by Fr. Saintourens and the Constitutions drawn up by Mère Rose and Fr. Potton. It is interesting to compare these texts as they reveal the differences of approach and indicate the subsequent orientation of the Perpetual Rosary Sisters.

In the proto-legislation drawn up at Calais, it is stated clearly that it is necessary for the perpetual recitation of the Rosary to be undertaken by Third Order Sisters, as it would not be possible for "Second Order" nuns to do it, as in fact this had already been tried and found impossible to combine with all of the observances necessary to that way of life. This experiment had been at Mauléon in the 1860's, although this is not stated. In particular, this Calais document states that Third Order sisters are never bound to the night office, and are not obliged to observe permanent abstinence or to make so many rigorous fasts. Now Mauléon had been founded over a controversy surrounding the night office in the restoration process at the monastery of Nay in the

days when Fr. Lacordaire was provincial in France. His approach was cautious, warning the sisters not to run before they could walk, not to take on too many observances before they had enough sisters to be sure of being able to maintain what they wanted to commit themselves to. The young sisters at Nay were impatient with such caution, and went ahead and founded Mauléon, where great importance was attached to observance. This then was the spirit in which Mère Rose had been formed for religious life. It is only natural that she should not feel at ease in a "Third Order" way of life, and do everything possible to draw the foundation she was responsible for as close as possible to—if not directly into—the "Second Order." In fact some years later, in 1895 when Mère Rose was planning a second edition of the Constitutions, she wrote to Rome making the following very revealing remarks:

There is a question weighing on my heart... The prologue [of the Perpetual Rosary Constitutions] situates us as regular tertiaries...everything in me, my love for my Order...makes me feel that this title is a contradiction. In reality, we are much more of the Second Order than the Third. Firstly, I belong to the Second Order by my profession, and our Constitutions are drawn from those of the Second Order. We are keeping all of the observances except for abstinence. Consequently I have replaced this preface with another one which simply states that 'we have our origins in the Second Order.'¹⁴

Interestingly enough, Chapter IV of the Calais document, "Practices and Observances" states: "The Sisters of the Perpetual Rosary will model themselves as closely as possible on the life of the Dominican *Friars*, as far as practices and observances are concerned." In Mère Rose's Constitutions, this sentence has been removed, and we read rather "May we walk in the footsteps of this fervent community [Mauléon] which has done so much in this century to promote perfectly regular life."

In the Calais document, an outline *horarium* is given, in which Matins are to be recited at 8 p.m. in the evening. There was to be permanent recitation of the Rosary throughout the night hours, but no question of an office at midnight. In the *Louvain* Constitutions, no *horarium* is printed, which would leave the possibility for the individual monasteries to organise things for themselves on this point and to include a night office.

Chapter V of the Calais document is devoted to the propagation of the Perpetual Rosary, which was at the very heart of Fr. Saintourens' plan. The sisters were to collaborate actively with the lay apostles—the Heads of Divisions and Heads of Sections—by transcribing lists, preparation of printed material, correspondence, and advice on how best to spread the devotion. This was why Fr. Saintourens wished for parlors with single grilles without curtains, to facilitate this collaboration. All of this would constitute "occupations suitable for the sisters" as the "fathers who are taken up with their numerous preaching engagements, have no time for such details." All of this has disappeared from the *Louvain* Constitutions. There is no mention at all of the Perpetual

Rosary movement outside the monastery; there is simply the statement, as in the Constitutions of the enclosed nuns, that the sisters support the apostolate of the friars through their prayers.

In the early stage of what was planned as the "Perpetual Rosary Congregation," there were to be lay associates. The ladies who ensured the running of the divisions and sections, would have the option of having a privileged relationship with the religious community as an affiliated member, and when the houses were big enough to permit it, they would be able to make retreats and participate in the liturgy. This was highly innovative, as it should be remembered that Dominican monasteries did not normally have guesthouse facilities in those days. These lay associates have disappeared in Mère Rose's Constitutions. The term "congregation" was abandoned, and very quickly the houses became known as "monasteries." Each one was autonomous, with the idea of a loose federation between the houses, although this had no basis in canon law.

The spirit of Mauléon was very strong in the 19th century, and whenever this community was involved in a foundation, it always left its particular mark. For example, the monastery at Saint-Maximin had not been conceived of by Blessed Fr. Cormier as a foundation of Mauléon, but simply, as in the case of Bon-Secours, that some sisters from there would help the new monastery to get going. Saint-Maximin was also intended as a house of the contemplative Third Order, especially suited for young women whose health did not permit them to take on the whole of the monastic observances. A truly worthy project, but in fact things worked out very differently: the sisters from Mauléon occupied the key posts in the new foundation (prioress, subprioress and novice mistress) for the first thirty years of its existence, and not surprisingly perhaps, the original plan was abandoned and Saint-Maximin became a "Second Order" monastery in 1888, some fifteen years only after its foundation.

A similar process happened with the Perpetual Rosary. In her memoirs, Mère Rose de Sainte-Marie is quite honest about her reluctance to leave the cloistered Second Order life for something else. It was only normal that once installed as prioress of the new project, she should do all she could to draw it as close as possible to the way of life she knew and loved, and with the support of two other sisters of Mauléon who had joined her in the foundation, it was naturally this style of life that would be communicated to the young recruits.

Besides the case of Saint-Maximin, quoted above, there is also that of Dinant (Belgium) which started life as a Perpetual Rosary monastery in 1895, but switched to the Constitutions of the Nuns in 1908. And, in the 20th century, there was in France the case of Taulignan, also founded for young women with a handicap, which adopted the Constitutions of the nuns in 1964. When one reads the documents associated with these changes of statute, it is clear that the sisters in question saw it as a form of "promotion" to pass from "Third" to "Second" Order, yet surely questions of fidelity to the founding charism and the initial vocation of the candidates should be the uppermost considerations.

It is indeed most regrettable that Fr. Potton introduced the appellation "Second Order" into the terminology of Dominican religious life in the 19th century.¹⁵ This label became very widespread from the 1860's onwards, but had, in fact, never been used in the Order of Preachers in the Middle Ages. It really gives the unfortunate impression of second and third class citizens, which was not in reality the case at all, and should never be so in a religious order that likes to think of itself as a Dominican family.

At the beginning of the 20th century, with new legislation concerning associations, and the separation of Church and State, religious communities were persecuted in France, and many were faced with exile. However, the rules were not applied uniformly all over the country: there was a degree of local discretion.¹⁶ Nevertheless, all communities were obliged to think about what they would do, if the worst came to the worst. According to a written record in the archives of the Château-Thierry monastery (A.G.O.P) the Perpetual Rosary community at Bonsecours, Rouen was not directly threatened with expulsion "but on the 25 April 1903, we were forced to set off for Baltimore, to comply with the desire of our bishop." Whether this was with the connivance of Fr. Saintourens, who had longstanding connections in Normandy, it is impossible to know.

After this departure from Bon-Secours in 1903, there remained in Europe only two Perpetual Rosary monasteries, Louvain and Dinant only, until 1908. However, the French-speaking sisters were to return from Baltimore in 1909 to Gent; according to archive sources, such was the express wish of Mère Rose before her death in America that same year. These returning sisters subsequently split into two branches in 1920: one Belgian which, after brief stays at Braine-le-Comte and La Sarte, produced the Perpetual Rosary monastery at Herne/Enghien in 1926,¹⁷ and one French, which gave Château-Thierry. This community immediately adopted the Constitutions of the nuns. Herne adopted these same statutes in 1960, and the descendants of the monastery at Louvain, who had moved to Banneux after the bombing, merged with Dinant in 1967. Thus, the specific Perpetual Rosary identity became extinct in Europe.

These events are interesting in their own right, and fill in some details of the history of communities that are dear to us, but they can also serve to encourage reflection on some wider issues. In the light of such histories, the passing of the "enclosed regular Third Order" could be seen as somewhat regrettable, even if the adjective "third" would ideally be replaced by some other appellation. In the present state of canon law, there are only two forms of religious life for women: the enclosed monastery or the congregation with a superior general. The kind of autonomous community, with a form of life both contemplative and apostolic, within a monastic framework, such as was possible in the old "enclosed regular Third Order" no longer finds its place. The future may bring further developments, but in the meantime Dominican nuns can remember gratefully the pioneering spirit of Fr. Saintourens and the Perpetual Rosary Sisters, who did much to advance Dominican monastic life around the world.

NOTES

1. Published by Union City Monastery in 1955 on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the foundation of the Perpetual Rosary Sisters.
2. *Ibid.* p.46.
3. A.G.O.P (Archives General of the Order of Preachers), XIV.950 LIG-48. The five letters are dated April 1876 from Nîmes; 19 December 1878 from Agen ; 28 May 1879 from Le Havre ; undated 1879 from the presbytery at Bonsecours near Rouen ; 18 July 1880 from Le Havre.
4. Fr Vincent Ligiez had already served under Master of the Order Jandel; he had become the unofficial ambassador of French speaking Dominican Sisters at the General Curia.
5. In Béthune, northern France.
6. The Dominican friars had only been able to restore their convent in Lille in 1868.
7. The Congregation of Dominican Sisters of the Sacred Heart was founded in northern France in 1876 by this same Mère Marie des Anges (Marie-Léonie Sicard); in 1959 it joined the Roman Congregation of Saint Dominic.
8. This foundation was made in 1878 and later transferred to Lourdes. The sisters lived in great poverty at Arles, and Mère Rose de Sainte-Marie was just recovering from typhoid fever.
9. Annals of the Perpetual Rosary Monastery of Banneux (Belgium), successor to the Monastery at Louvain, bombed in 1940. (These archives are now housed at the monastery of Herne.)
10. This was the expression used by the Prioress/foundress of Mauléon, Mère Marie-Agnès Lassalle.
11. The Dominican province of Sainte-Rose in Belgium had been restored in 1860.
12. From the archives of the Perpetual Rosary Monastery of Banneux (Belgium).
13. When in her memoirs, Mère Rose refers to consulting in 1883 "a Father of the Province of Lyon in exile at Rijckholt [Holland], so as to establish definitively Constitutions appropriate to our way of life" the reference is obviously to Fr. Potton.
14. Manuscript letter, A.G.O.P., Santa Sabina.
15. Fr. Potton uses this term in his introduction to his commentary on the Constitutions of the nuns, and also in the title he gives to his volume: *Constitutions of Dominican Sisters of the Second Order*. But it should be stressed that this was a personal initiative, and not the result of a decision by a General Chapter of the Order. The previous French language edition of Constitutions, dating back to 1689, had as title *Constitutions of the Religious Sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic*.
16. For example, among Dominican nuns, the monasteries of Nay, Chinon, La Croix (Paris), Châtellerault and Oullins were exiled, but Prouilhe, Langeac, Dax, Lourdes and Saint-Maximin were not.
17. The move to Herne was prompted by the possibility of purchasing a monastery recently abandoned by Carmelites from Angoulême who had been in exile in Belgium since 1903, and who were now able to return home to France.

PREACHERS OF THE SILENT WORD IN A NEW CENTURY

Sr. Mary Catharine, O.P.
Summit, NJ

At the Dominican Family Assembly in Manila, the Dominican sister seated next to me at dinner on the last evening turned toward me and over the din of the featured entertainment for that night suddenly asked me, "Sister, what's your ministry?"

Although this sister was one of the organizing committee I thought that perhaps she wasn't aware of what branch I was representing. I too raised my voice over the music and almost shouted, "I'm a nun."

"Yes, I know that," she replied. "But what's your ministry in the monastery?"

"My ministry? Oh, you mean my work assignments?"

I was trying to think quickly and come up with an understandable if not acceptable answer. "What do I tell her?" I asked myself, as I thought of the varied work assignments that fill my days in the monastery. In relation to my vocation I really should say "chantress" as this office is about proclaiming the Word of God, but that sounded ethereal. Infirmarian? Printer? Vocation Directress? None of these duties was my "ministry" but unfortunately, this was neither the time nor the place in which I could engage in a serious and hopefully enlightening discussion on the specific vocation of the nuns of the Order.

"Infirmarian and vocation directress," I shouted back.

"Oh." With that my sister-neighbor turned to the person on her opposite side and began another conversation.

This quick exchange highlighted for me the seemingly enigmatic place the nuns hold in the Order and the Dominican Family. I mused that just a few days previous to the Assembly the fifteen nun representatives from all over the world had spent a pleasant morning in our Cainta monastery introducing ourselves, sharing the history, life and particular challenges of our individual monasteries. I later realized that not one sister had shared what she did in the monastery. Only toward the end of the Assembly did I learn that two of the nuns were serving their communities as prioress.

Fast forward to a sunny noon meal two years later in our refectory a week after the September 2002 Prioresses Meeting in Northampton, PA. We were listening to the taped talks from the meeting at dinner and had begun listening to the presentation of Sr. Elizabeth McDonough, O.P., on the canonical aspects of Federation/Association.

At the beginning of her talk, Sr. Elizabeth situated the discussion within the context of the life of "cloistered, contemplative Dominican nuns." As I listened, ideas that had been percolating on a back burner in my mind since my exchange with my Dominican sister began to clamor for my attention.

What struck me as I listened is that viewing our discussions from the window of who we are can make an incredible difference and color our understanding of the unique vocation and calling that is our gift for the Order and the Church. What I mean by this is that repeatedly Sr. Elizabeth described us as "cloistered, contemplative Dominican nuns." "So what is wrong with that?" you may ask, wondering just what went on in my formation. Nothing and everything. Concerning canonical categories, Sr. Elizabeth is entirely right. However, in relation to the Order "cloistered, contemplative Dominican nun" fails to adequately express who we are in the Order and in the Church.

Who are we? We are Nuns of the Order of Preachers! Women called not just to seek God in the silence and solitude of the enclosure but also to join, not just our prayer, but our lives in the mission of the Order of Preachers.

Although I can only speak from my experience of the past thirteen years in the monastery, I would suggest that this specific identity of being Nuns of the Order of Preachers has been not lost, but somewhat "forgotten" in our quest to renew our way of life within our authentic charism. For a while, the emphasis was on study, and on formation. Then the spotlight shifted to observance, or rather how the observances were observed. Lately, because of *Verbi Sponsa*, there has been an interest in looking at enclosure. Lastly, due to the necessity of circumstances, the subject of conversations, chapters and exchanges among the monasteries has been that of federation/association.

As we approach our 800th birthday and as our communities face crises that are our particular challenge in the 21st century, it seems at times that a common understanding of the elements of our life is fragile, and occasionally harmony becomes dissonance.

One emphasizes the monastic tradition, another theological study, one strict enclosure, while another might propose another view. Some suggest a return to a more radical observance while others propose a need to contemporize our Dominican charism.

Associated with the "Holy Preaching"

We are "of the Order of Preachers." I would suggest that many of our debates and grapplings with the flesh-and-blood living of our way of life in the world today would be radically clarified if we situated our reflection, not from the foundation that we are cloistered or contemplative or monastic, but first and foremost Nuns of the Order of Preachers. Nowhere in our Constitutions are we described as "cloistered

contemplatives" or "monastic contemplatives," or "cloistered Dominicans." Always, we are described as Nuns of the Order of Preachers who observe the norms of the purely contemplative life. The emphasis is on our vocation, in virtue of our profession as being part of the "Holy Preaching." The *Fundamental Constitutions* tell us that, "By their way of life *both the friars and the nuns* press onward to that perfect love of God and neighbor which is effective in caring for and obtaining the salvation of all people."¹

Emphasizing this fundamental truth in no way minimizes our cloistered contemplative way of life. In fact, the more deeply we become aware of the need of prayer to vivify the work of preaching of the Gospel, the more we are convinced, as was Saint Dominic, that the preaching of the brethren (and by extension the Dominican family) must be rooted in the contemplation which opens us up to the needs of our brothers and sisters who are thirsting for the Truth.

Enter the nuns

How the first nuns were founded, by whom, and when they actually became canonically part of the Order of Preachers, are not issues I wish to elaborate on here. Our foggy early history is full of intriguing questions, and frustrating answers that are often only partial. What we do know for certain, though, roots us deeply in the conviction that the foundation of the nuns was no mere afterthought or unavoidable obligation. In her book, *The Habit: A History of Clothing of Catholic Nuns*, Elizabeth Kuhns expresses the nuns' unique part in the Order: "He [Dominic] also believed that the success of his Order of Preachers would depend upon the prayers of intercession by the sisters. In doing so, he established a new partnership role for contemplative nuns, whom he considered vital participants rather than simply a 'second' order."²

In the *Legenda* of Sister Cecilia we are told that, "In the evening time he [Dominic] used to come to the sisters, and give them a conference in his brethren's presence and he used to instruct them in the duties of the Order, for they had no other master but himself."³

This one sentence from a first generation source of the Order is rich in meaning and assures us that the nuns were of the Order from the beginning. It also tells us that St. Dominic took pains to make sure that the nuns received a good formation in the Order. I believe that it is also significant that Dominic preached to the nuns in "his brethren's presence" for it tells us that the brethren and nuns are formed together to be of one mind and heart. The brethren and nuns were to share the same vocation, striving for the goal of preaching for the salvation of souls, yet each according to their particular expression. Gerald Vann, O.P., in *To Heaven with Diana* borrows Pere Cormier's analogy: "As Adam needed and was given a helpmate like to himself, so the first Order needed and was given a helpmate to share its work and life."⁴

A helpmate? Today so often there is a lot of talk about being equal in the Dominican Family. It is true that all share in the Dominican Charism equally, no one branch holding claim to a lion's share. Too often, however, the discussion around equality centers around a grasping of functions or roles, rather than a *receiving* in order to share out of the abundance of our passionate love for the Truth which is Jesus Christ.

That the contemplative vocation of the nuns is complementary to that of the preaching of the friars is no slight against the nuns and certainly does not deny them anything in the preaching mission of the Order. For the Word to be sown on good ground it must be first received in gratitude and pondered in love. Only then can it be flung out over the seed ground and take root.

In a mysterious way that cannot be expressed in words, we take to heart the preaching of our brothers all over the world and by the simple living of our lives, made fruitful by our profession, we offer our brothers to the Father, confident that "[our] petitions and those of [our] sisters have been made to known to God to no small purpose."⁵

Such a role in the Order is more than the particular way one branch shares the mission of the Order. While the monasteries do realize the Order's *missio* in the way proper to them, i.e. preaching by their presence, prayer, the encounters with people on the phone or in the parlor, etc, the nuns' vocation is unique in the Order in that the preaching mission of the Gospel is accomplished *together* with the brethren. "Contemplatives have...a double responsibility: to strengthen preachers by their contemplation, and to form them by their thirst for the Word. The cloister is consequently the place *par excellence* where the mystery of holy preaching ought to be lived."⁶ Like the lay brother of old who used to pray the rosary in the pew below the friar preaching in the pulpit so as to remind him that his "success" was not of his own making, we participate in the preaching of the brethren not just in prayer but by our quotidian offering—whether it be our joys and sorrows, washing the dishes or studying; creative work like painting or weaving, or perhaps taking a turn at bringing out the garbage. Because each action is a continuation of the holocaust we made at solemn profession, whatever work we are engaged in is not useless but shares in the preaching for the salvation of souls. It is a truth that might seem too simple, but the effects of our actions have a value which we will know only in eternity.

What do I mean when I say I am a Nun of the Order of Preachers?

Unlike other monastic-contemplative orders, our title "of the Order of Preachers" expresses our unique specific vocation in the Church. Sadly, our original title as "Sister Preacheresses" has been lost over the centuries and in our present day this nomenclature would be misunderstood. However, to designate contemplative nuns with no active apostolate, no "ministry" that is visible, as "Sister Preacheresses" remains a powerful and striking statement of our unique vocation. We are not Carmelites living a common life, or Poor Clares in a white habit, or Benedictines with

a democratic form of government. We are women who "while commissioned by God primarily for prayer, are not for that reason excluded from the ministry of the Word."⁷

Do I see the way of life of a nun of the Order of Preachers through this lens? When we discuss particular aspects of our life at chapter or at meetings, is this my frame of reference?

I ask these questions because sometimes I wonder if we don't fall into the trap of trying to be "successful" nuns—of trying to "do" the observances rather than have the observances support and sustain our life centered on contemplating the Word. We think we'll get high marks for enclosure if we manage to eliminate some exits—exits that may in fact be necessary in particular circumstances or localities. Or perhaps we feel we are failing to live the life as fully as we should, if our time for study isn't as regular or as long as it is for another sister or even another monastery. (Of course, I'm not talking about wasting time that could be used fruitfully.)

What might be more insidious is the idea that if the right ambiance was created, i.e., if as much manual labor as possible was eliminated, or if the right creative work was fostered by the community, or the right books read, *then* we would be true nuns of the Order. I realize that on paper, enumerated in simplistic terms, these ideas look exaggerated; but sometimes we do get caught up in these gossamer threads.

If however, I see my life as a nun of the Order of Preachers as a life searching for the Truth that is the Incarnate Word of God, as a life poured out for the salvation of souls, and for the preaching of the Good News, then, while I work towards that balance and synthesis of prayer, study, and work that is particularly unique to our Dominican charism, I can resist doing so self-consciously and also resist constantly taking my spiritual blood pressure. Perhaps, due to circumstances that are either communal or personal, the observances cannot be lived as ideally as wished. Does this lessen or negate the authenticity or efficacy of my vocation as a nun of the Order of Preachers?

Our life is about love. It is about a love that enables us to live "with one mind and heart." It is a love that compels us to seek the Face of God. Through the gift of contemplation we become aware of our call to live within the communitarian life of Father, Son and Holy Spirit that we seek to image in our communities. It is this very gift of God that we must not grasp tightly but give to others. While our tradition does not place as great an emphasis on the spousal dimension of our consecration as do other contemplative orders, still the traditional understanding of the consecrated woman as "Spouse of Christ" does have ramifications for our communal and personal approach to our mission in the Order. From this spousal character flows an understanding that our consecrated lives are lived in and with Christ Crucified: "You see writ with wonderful beauty when you gaze on your Savior Jesus stretched out on the cross, as though on a parchment....Where, I ask you, my beloved, could the lesson of love be learnt as it is learnt here?"⁸ Fast-knit to Christ we find our vocation

to spiritual maternity, "never ceas[ing] to make intercession with the God of our salvation that all men and women might be saved."⁹

In a tradition that prizes the intellectual life, how often do we use the word "passionate" to describe particular Dominican characteristics—a passionate search for Truth, a passionate desire for the salvation of the world, a passionate cry for Mercy. To be passionate means to be full of ardor, full of zeal, to have intense and ardent desire. I think that this is an adjective that should especially describe the nuns of the Order. Called to sit at the feet of Jesus, called to have our "eyes always on the Lord," as Bl. Jordan so often admonished Bl. Diana and her community of nuns at Bologna, we have eyes for what is the deepest desire of the heart of God—the desire that every created person share in the love-life of the Triune God.

The desire for the salvation of all flows out of this living of *anima una et cor unum in Deum*. In her commentary on the Constitutions, Sr. Marie-Ancilla has a beautiful section on this apostolic dimension of our life. Commenting on the Fundamental Constitutions she says, "...[L]ike Dominic, we need to enter into this movement of love (communion with God who is love) and consequently share his zeal for the salvation of souls."¹⁰ We have not made profession to engage in a "project," or a "program of life" but rather to enter into a movement of love. Only from this dynamic relationship will the monastic observances become not activities that turn us in on ourselves but turn us upward and outward to the beauty of sharing in Jesus' salvific work of redemption.

Further on, Sister Marie-Ancilla continues: "It is not only a question of the charity which formed monastic communion in the twelfth century, but that 'true and efficacious charity which procures the salvation of souls,' which Saint Dominic implored of God. Dominic's heart was so filled with love for the Lord that he participated in the deepest plans of His heart. To him it meant offering himself as Christ did, giving himself with such intensity that the gift won souls."¹¹

Facing the challenge of the 21st Century—the New Evangelization

In his apostolic letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* the Holy Father has called on the entire Church to proclaim the Gospel anew as we begin this new millennium.

More than ever, the world of the third millennium both hungers for and needs to hear the gift of the truth of the Incarnation. John Paul II reminds us that, "the men and women of our day—often perhaps unconsciously—ask believers not only to 'speak' of Christ, but in a certain sense to 'show' him to them. And is not the Church's task to reflect the light of Christ in every historical period, to make his face shine also before the generations of the new millennium?"¹²

In his talk to the Provincial Assembly of Saint Joseph's Province in 1999, Fr. Augustine DiNoia, O.P. suggests that in light of the preaching mandate given to the Order for the Church by Honourous III, the New Evangelization is a preeminently

"Dominican Moment." It is up to all members of the Order to respond to this invitation of the Holy Father with creativity and most of all with zeal.

In many ways, the challenges and crisis of faith of our own time share many similarities with the world of our Father Dominic. Both the world of the thirteenth century and our world share the challenge of great cultural change. There is a hunger for God, often expressed in vague, generic attempts at "being spiritual." Dualism is still with us. Most of all, the value of the human person created by God to share in His life for all eternity is assaulted daily by abortion, euthanasia, sexual perversions, and the aberrations brought about by even beneficial advances of scientific research.

When one reflects on the place the first nuns of Prouille had in Saint Dominic's mission, it is not surprising that the first monastery of nuns itself was called "The Holy Preaching." From his years of night vigils and prayer, and from the lack of success in converting the Catharists from heresy by the Cistercian preachers, Dominic was convinced that for the Gospel to be preached convincingly it must first be deeply rooted in contemplation. It must also remain in contemplation.

Father Aniceto Fernandez, O.P., reminded the nuns in 1971 when giving us our new Constitutions that, "the specific mission of the contemplative vocation...is to undertake, cherish and promote what is most deep in the life of the Church."¹³ We nuns of the Order are then compelled to respond to the challenge of the New Evangelization.

Precisely because our monasteries *are* places where the Word of God is pondered deeply in silence, abiding deeply in the heart of each nun and more especially in the heart of the community, I believe that our vocation as nuns of a preaching order in the Church is particularly suited to respond to this invitation of the Holy Father. He reminds us that first, "It is important that what we propose, with the help of God, should be profoundly rooted in contemplation and prayer. Ours is a time of continual movement which often leads to restlessness, with the risk of 'doing for the sake of doing.' We must resist this temptation by trying 'to be' before trying 'to do.'"¹⁴

The world needs the witness of the holiness of our lives, which, faithful to our tradition cannot happen in isolation. This transformation will only happen in and through the growth in charity of our common life. "This transformation takes place in step with that love which Christ's call infuses in the depth of the individual—that love which constitutes the very substance of consecration: a man or woman's vowing of self to God in religious profession, on the foundation of the sacramental consecration of Baptism."¹⁵

Our redemption is an act of God's love for us. It is the love of Christ the Bridegroom: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son" (Jn. 3:16) and therefore we are called, first by our Baptism and then by our consecration, to respond in love to Christ the Redeemer as "Bride" with the gift of our whole being. The more

we ponder this truth, the more we allow it to transform our lives, the more we will be hollowed out to be vessels of God's love poured out for others. And as the Incarnate Word takes even deeper root in our hearts, the more we can respond in love "completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church" (Col. 1:24).

Today more than ever, our monasteries must be places that radiate the Face of God. As nuns of an Order committed to preaching the Good News of Christ the Redeemer we are obliged more than ever to embrace the world in love because it has first been loved by Christ. "Religious profession places in the heart of each one of you, dear brothers and sisters, the love of the Father: that love which is in the heart of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world. It is this love which embraces the world and everything in it that comes from the Father..."¹⁶

Today, at the beginning of a new century, the world needs the "Cry of Dominic" to be incarnated in our monastic lives. It needs the life-long holocaust of our self offering. In a time of so much violence and division the world also needs the witness of "the unanimity of our life, rooted in the love of God."¹⁷ Most of all, it needs our receptivity to the indwelling of the Word and to see how we witness as a community to the Truth that "we have seen the Lord!" (John 20:25)

NOTES

1. *Liber Constitutionum Monialium Ordiniis Predicatorum*, 1987, Fundamental Constitution of the Order II.
2. Elizabeth Kuhns, *The Habit: A History of the Clothing of Catholic Nuns* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2003) p. 210.
3. Sister Cecilia, *The Lives of the Brethren of the Order of Preachers: The Legend of St. Dominic*, trans. Placid Conway, OP (Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1955) p.78.
4. Gerald Vann, O.P., *To Heaven with Diana!* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, Inc, 1960) p. 12.
5. *Ibid.*, Letter 34.
6. Thomas Philippe, O.P., *The Contemplative Life*, trans. Carmine Buonaiuto (New York, NY: Crossroads, 1990) p. 79.
7. *LCM*, 96.
8. Vann, Letter 45.
9. *LCM* 74, IV.
10. Sister Marie-Ancilla, O.P., "Commentary on the Fundamental Constitution of the Nuns of the Order of Preachers," trans. Sr. Mary Thomas Noble, O.P. (*Dominican Monastic Search*, Vol. 17, 1998) p. 55.
11. *Ibid.* p. 55.
12. Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, January 6, 2001, §16.
13. *LCM*, p. 6
14. *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, §16
15. Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Redemptionis Donum*, March 25, 1984, § 9.
16. *Ibid.*, § 9.
17. *LCM* 2, II.

THE RIVER THAT GIVES JOY TO GOD'S CITY: Scriptural Reflections on Dominican Contemplative Life and Prayer

Sr. Mary Thomas, O.P.
Lufkin, TX

Introduction

During the four-week psalter of the Divine Office, we sing Psalm 46, which contains this lovely verse: "There is a river that gives joy to God's city, the place where the Most High dwells."¹ What is this river, and how does it give joy? There are many answers and valid interpretations of this verse, but I have often wondered how it might shed some light on my life as a Dominican nun. Recently, as I read over the Constitutions, I was struck by this passage in the article on regular observance:

The nuns, while living together in harmony, follow Jesus as he withdraws into solitude to pray. In this way they are a sign of that blessed city Jerusalem which the brethren build up by their preaching.²

As the enclosed, contemplative branch of the Order of Preachers, we are an eschatological sign of the heavenly Jerusalem. And just as the holy city had a river running through it, flowing from the throne of the Lamb, our mystical city has its own river, the sign of the Holy Spirit among us. This is our life of prayer.

Prayer is an essential part of our vocation. Our lives are "harmoniously ordered" to the call God offers each of us: to offer prayer and make supplication for the salvation of the whole world. Many saints, particularly Ignatius of Antioch, have seen the flowing river as a type of prayer; the Holy Spirit praying within us with groans too deep for words.³ Although we have many other works which must be done throughout the day, prayer runs through them all, the silent, mysterious river. When we gather as a community for prayer, or when we pray privately, we feel the urgency Abhishiktananda described:

Everything through which God reveals Himself to man is a summons to go further, to go beyond, always beyond...to advance up the stream of God's Self-Manifestation, to aim at the Source itself from which everything comes, to seek that spring which is nevertheless for ever far beyond and more ultimate than any water welling up from it.⁴

In the Dominican tradition of prayer, there has always been a great importance placed on Scripture, in *lectio divina* and in study. For the nuns, our preaching ministry is centered on prayer. I have chosen certain Scripture passages

to reinforce our vocation of prayer and penance within the larger context of the Dominican Order. These passages are 1 Kings 17:1-10, the story of Elijah at the Wadi Cherith; Genesis 32:23-32, Jacob's encounter with God at the Jabbok; and Esther A:4-10 and F:1-6, Mordecai's dream and its fulfillment. Through the various means of prayer prescribed in our Constitutions, the nuns play a unique and essential role in the Dominican apostolate.

I. Elijah at the Wadi Cherith (1 Kgs 17:1-10)

"He shall drink from the stream by the wayside, and therefore he shall lift up his head." (Ps 110:7)

Although the prophet Elijah is commonly associated with the Carmelite Order, this episode has a wonderful Dominican feel to it. He preaches the word of God in a dramatic moment of inspired prophecy; he retires to the solitude of contemplation; he emerges, renewed, to begin his ministry once again among the people. It is a type of the ministry of Christ, Who spent whole nights in solitude and prayer before going out again among the people and teaching them.

The story also provides a clear example of the need for obedient humility in the preaching ministry. Elijah has made a tremendous announcement: no rain or dew will fall, except at his word. If he had made this prophecy in our century, Elijah would have been swamped with offers for talk show appearances and interviews! It is likely that something of this kind happened on a much smaller scale: people pressing around him, questioning him, offering gifts. It would be easy to accept the homage, to bask in this fleeting moment of glory, but Elijah withdraws instead, obedient to God's command: "Go away from here, go eastward, and hide yourself in the wadi Cherith which lies east of the Jordan." Did Elijah wonder about how he would live? God anticipates his concern, telling him, "You can drink from the stream, and I have ordered the ravens to bring you food there." And so they did: bread in the morning, meat in the evening. While the country suffered from drought, Elijah drank freely from the Wadi Cherith.

This literal experience of withdrawal to be alone with the Lord is mirrored in our lives through private prayer. We have many occasions for private prayer in the monastic schedule, but at certain times, God offers us an invitation similar to the one He extended to Elijah: "Leave all this, and come to the place I will show you; I will provide everything you need." Prayer during these times becomes like the irrigated garden of St. Teresa of Avila; everything just flows—naturally, without dryness or tedium. There may be touches of infused contemplation, or simply deep, peaceful recollection. The soul seems to have withdrawn from all the clamor of daily life to a quiet place where the Spirit continually pours down streams of living water.

This heightened sense of God's presence flows into our participation in the sacrament of the Eucharist. During these times of grace, participation at Mass becomes more intensely spiritual; we are aware as never before that this is truly Christ, the Lamb of God, hidden under the sacramental signs of bread and wine.

Elijah received the bread from heaven as a foreshadowing of the Bread of Life; although it was not the true bread that came down from heaven—the Eucharist—he was filled with gratitude for his sustenance and the God Who provided it so freely.

However, one day Elijah awoke to find that the stream had dried up. In the same way we inevitably find that our own stream of divine consolation has dried up. There is a natural sense of disappointment, even concern that we may have offended God in some way: has He taken His Holy Spirit from us, leaving us bereft? The story of Elijah settles all our doubts; one stream has dried up only to make way for a new stream.

When the Wadi Cherith dried up—"for the country had no rain," as Scripture reminds us—Elijah again heard the voice of the Lord: "Leave here and go to Zarephath. I have provided a widow to care for you." God has a message for us, as well: "Leave the consolations of private prayer; step away from the personal delight you find in receiving the Eucharist. Go out and serve your neighbor." God gives us these gifts so that we may go forth into the world and share them with others: *contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere*. We need our times of private prayer, and we need the sacramental meal of the Eucharist. These are both intensely personal activities, unique, indivisible. Because of this, there is always the temptation to stay where we are, reclining at the Wadi Cherith, isolated from our brothers and sisters, enjoying our consolations quietly. But God gives us consolations, delights and insights in prayer in order to increase our love for Him and allow this to overflow into our charity toward others.

When Elijah finished his long journey to Zarephath, the first person he met was a poor widow. Although she had only a small amount of flour and oil, she agreed to share what she had. God rewarded her charity and generosity by ensuring that as long as the drought lasted, there was always flour in the jar and oil in the jug—plenty to feed the widow and her son, as well as their guest. Our own experiences in private prayer can have a similar effect, as God rewards our own small acts of everyday charity and generosity with an ever-renewing stream of life, hope, and love. As we continue our mission, founded on obedience to God's word, we find that the heavenly bread, the Eucharist, is always available for us. Like the miraculous oil and flour, it never runs out, but always provides during the season of drought. The stream of consolation, our spiritual Wadi Cherith, flows into a different channel as we become ourselves bearers of the Spirit, supplying water to a thirsty world.

II. Jacob at the River Jabbok: Gn 32:23-32

"He is like a tree planted near running water, that yields its fruit in due season, and whose leaves never fade." (Ps 1:3)

Saint Dominic often kept vigils of prayer throughout the night, pleading with God for sinners. In imitation of our father Dominic, we keep watch as well, although our vigils may not always occur during the night. We have times for adoration of the

Blessed Sacrament; night adoration; vigils kept with the sick and the dying; vigils kept during times of crisis. At these times, when we are alone with God in the silence, we are often blessed with a deepening awareness of our sinful condition and the overwhelming holiness of God. Most of the time, this self-knowledge comes to us gently, but at times God is forced to use stronger methods. We see a type of this in the experience of Jacob at the river Jabbok.

In the middle of the night Jacob suddenly sent his entire family—wives, children, servants, livestock—across the river, while he remained alone on the opposite shore. He needed to spend some time alone in quiet thought and prayer; the next day he was supposed to meet his brother Esau, and he was sure Esau would kill him on the spot. But just as Jacob composes himself for a quiet vigil by the river, a man appears, who "wrestled with him until the break of dawn." In silence they grapple with each other, on and on through the long night, until at last dawn comes.

One of the ancient monastic traditions we practice in our life is *lectio divina*. This prayer permeates our day; it is part of the Divine Office and part of our studies. We may incorporate *lectio* into prayer in various ways, but the essence remains unchanged: the silent reflection on God's word, turning the phrases over in our hearts and pondering their meaning. The most familiar passages can suddenly open into new layers of meaning as we allow the Spirit to work within us.

Vigils are an excellent complement to *lectio divina*, because it is during these times of silence and quiet listening that the Divine Word is able to leap down. "When peaceful silence lay over all...down from the heavens...leapt your all-powerful Word."⁵ Sometimes, as He did with Jacob, God bears "the sharp sword of [His] inexorable decree." We struggle with the difficult words of Scripture, trying to incorporate the truths the Spirit gives us—trying to allow them to cleanse our minds and purify our hearts. We do not always want to accept the truths God gives us, and so like Jacob, we wrestle with Him, searching for an alternative or a loophole. Like Jacob, we long to be holy, but often we only want to be holy at certain times, in certain areas of our lives. Recall that Jacob had many theophanies prior to this definitive encounter: in the first of these, God extended the covenant promise He had previously given to Abraham and Isaac. Later, during his stay with Laban, God supported—or at least permitted—Jacob's crafty means of achieving his ends. If God stands by us during times such as these, is He giving His blessing to our mediocrity? It is a fair question: When God commanded us to be holy, did He really mean *all the time*?

Lectio divina reminds us of what God commands; the time spent in keeping vigil brings those commands home. The confrontation between our selfish estimations—"This is good enough!"—and God's demand for absolute holiness provide the conflict. Not surprisingly, Saint Augustine described this wrestling match as a type of the Passion of Christ: the absolute surrender to the will of God.

"The man said, 'Let me go, for it is daybreak.' But Jacob said, 'I will not let you go until you bless me.'" In his letter to the Order on study, Fr. Timothy Radcliffe writes, "One wrestles so that the truth can win...The other person always has something to teach us and we fight with them so as to receive the gift."⁶ We wrestle with God for the same reason. In our deepest hearts, we know that God's way is the best way. But it is difficult to admit this, and sometimes impossible to admit defeat. God understands this, and so He even allows us sometimes to prevail against Him in conflict. His vision of every situation is much larger than ours; what appears to be a victory may in fact be the beginning of our ultimate surrender.

"When the man saw that he could not prevail over him, he struck Jacob's hip at its socket." The conflict between God and man always leaves a mark of some kind, visible or invisible. Sometimes both are present. Jacob limps across the river to join his family, and he limps for the rest of his life. But Jacob has experienced a change of heart as well. The first sign of this change is the impossible reconciliation with Esau, which takes place peacefully the following day. Jacob is no longer the adroit schemer, the "supplanter." He becomes so simple that his own sons deceive him with ease on various occasions. But although he appears to be defeated, he is victorious. He has completely given himself to God, and so all good things are given back to him in the end. He is the tree planted beside flowing waters, who does not fear the heat when it comes. He no longer has to rely solely on human means; his trust is in the Lord. We, too, emerge from our struggles in *lectio* and vigils as changed people. We have allowed the waters of the Jabbok River to be our witness as well, a sign of the purifying action which cleanses our motives and the deepest recesses of our hearts. The sun rises and our vigil ends; today we are challenged by a new passage in our *lectio*; but the river continues to be the witness and source of our rebirth.

IV. Mordecai's Dream and Its Fulfillment: "The River Is Esther" (Esther A:4;10;F:1-6)⁷

"He cleft the rock, and the water gushed forth; it flowed through the dry lands like a stream..." (Psalm 105:41)

From the literalism of the Hebrew Scriptures, we turn to a symbolic discussion of the life of prayer, given in the Greek portions of the book of Esther. It is fitting, then, that the river we encounter here is not, so to speak, a real river; the river is Esther herself, the symbol of God's grace flowing through a human channel, bringing salvation to all the people.

Prior to the events described in the book of Esther—the beauty contest, Haman, the *pur*, and the rest—Mordecai, Esther's uncle and guardian, has a dream. Two dragons prepare for mortal combat, but when the terrified people cry out to God for help, "there appeared to come forth a great river, a flood of water from a little spring." The dream makes no sense to Mordecai until the Jews have been saved through Esther's intervention; at the end of the book he declares, "The river is

Esther, whom the king married and made queen. The two dragons are myself and Haman...My people is Israel, who cried to God and was saved."

As discussed previously, one of Dominic's great concerns was the salvation of souls. This zealous desire pressed him to found the nuns, a group of women who could spend their entire lives interceding for all men and women. Today, everything we do as Dominican nuns continues this theme in which we beg for mercy for the world. In addition to our private work of intercession, we also have specific times for making our intercessions known publicly; during Mass and especially during the two major hours of the Divine Office, Lauds and Vespers. This is not just an expression of our general benevolence; it is a duty, a responsibility we have before God. Like Esther, we were chosen by the King (a greater King than Ahasuerus!), called from our homes to live in His courts and serve Him. So it is only natural that our friends, families, and people of all kinds expect us to stand boldly before the Lord—even in fear and trembling—and present our supplications to Him.

In Mordecai's dream, he and Haman appeared as two dragons opposed to each other. Recall that Haman's animosity toward Mordecai (later extended to all Jews) derived from Mordecai's ability to thwart his plans and his refusal to bow down before Haman. Mordecai's vision of himself as a dragon suggests his own pride and vainglory, which may have been the underlying motivation for his defiance. His observance of Jewish law is rather self-serving; he claims his allegiance to God as an excuse for defying Haman's demands, but sends his adopted daughter to be part of a pagan king's harem.⁸ Our own actions and petitions to God are often tinged with self-interest, too, but God is able to use these for the greater glory of His name and His purpose in the world. For Mordecai, the lingering traces of pride are swept away in the cleansing flood of Esther's total holocaust of self, her complete surrender to God. Mordecai realizes his own role as an instrument of God in this adventure; it was for this reason, he points out, that Esther became queen.

Esther's response to the terrible news of impending destruction defies the wisdom of the world. Instead of immediately petitioning the king, or seeking advice from those close to him, she calls for penance—a three-day fast in which all the Jews in Susa are asked to participate, along with Esther and her maids. Esther dresses in sackcloth and ashes as a sign of her personal humility and penitence, and spends the entire time fervently imploring God, begging for salvation for her people. Her prayer is a wonderful example of intercession: she glorifies God, reminds Him of her lowliness and fear, and begs His assistance

Be mindful of us, O Lord. Manifest yourself in the time of our distress and give me courage, King of gods and Ruler of every power. Put in my mouth persuasive words in the presence of the lion, and turn his heart to hatred for our enemy, so that he and those who are in league with him may perish. Save us by your power, and help me, who am alone and have no one but you, O Lord.⁹

Esther's prayer and intercession is strengthened by those who have joined her in fasting and prayer. Thus fortified, she makes her final preparations; she adorns herself in her best clothes and jewelry, and presents herself with great humility before her husband the King. Even at this great moment she continues to move at God's pace, first requesting a banquet, then inviting Haman, and finally—at the King's request—disclosing her true desire.

This is definitely a counter-cultural approach to social justice! In our modern world, we are encouraged to speak up, to have a defiant attitude when dealing with crises on every level. There is a general sense that nothing can be accomplished without aggressive—and, often, newsworthy—action. As a result, the contemplative approach, often silent and hidden, seems to lose its validity. But this is exactly the method Esther used so successfully. She knew that nothing can be accomplished without first acknowledging the supremacy of God and our complete dependence on Him for everything. This is why our apostolate is so essential to the Order today. We surrender ourselves completely to God, interceding for all the needs of the world, while our brothers and sisters in the active apostolate take the action needed. In doing this, we are imitating not only Esther, but also the woman who is the highest model of intercession: Mary, the woman who is queen of the poor ones, the *anawim* of God. When we have emptied ourselves, God comes to fill us with everything that He is. With the psalmist, we cry out for water in the parched land; in response, God releases the graces He longs to give us, "and the water gushed forth; it flowed through the dry lands like a stream."

V. Conclusion

Intercession is a form of prayer which is traditionally Dominican because it is so oriented toward the salvation of souls. But it only becomes effective in a manner proportionate to our faithfulness in the other aspects of our prayer lives. Both of the streams discussed earlier, the Cherith and the Jabbok, are linked to the Jordan, the great river in which Christ was baptized. All the means of prayer discussed above flow into our work of intercession, increasing its power just as all the small tributaries flowing into a river increase its size and strength. We must allow all these means of prayer to break open our hearts, making them channels through which the Spirit can flow forth freely. Little by little, the work of prayer cuts a passage through the rock-hardness of our hearts, and the waters of salvation flow forth; "the river which gives joy to God's city."¹⁰ It is our great responsibility as Dominican nuns to ensure that the waters of this river flow forth freely. May we all be inspired through Scripture and through everything we read and study to fulfill our Dominican vocation to its highest end, the salvation of souls.

NOTES

1. *Liturgy of the Hours*, Friday Week 1, second psalm at Evening Prayer; also at Evening Prayer II for the Common of the Dedication of a Church and at Office of Readings for the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
2. *LCM* n.35
3. *LH* p. 1491. The sentence reads, "Rather within me is the living water which says deep inside me: 'Come to the Father.'"
4. Abhishiktananda, *Prayer*. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967. p.28).
5. Wisdom 18:15.
6. Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, "The Wellspring of Hope: Study and the Annunciation of the Good News." (*IDI*: Santa Sabina, Rome: 1996, p. 12).
7. I am using the *New American Bible*, which labels these sections of Esther as Chapter A, B, et cetera. Other editions based on the Vulgate incorporate these sections of Esther differently; sometimes in italics.
8. In Chapter C:5-7, Mordecai prays:

You know all things. You know, O Lord, that it was not out of insolence or pride or desire for fame that I acted thus in not bowing down to the proud Haman. Gladly would I have kissed the soles of his feet for the salvation of Israel. But I acted as I did so as not to place the honor of man above that of God. I will not bow down to anyone but you, my Lord. It is not out of pride that I am acting thus.

This sounds exaggerated; besides, it is always easy to protest our humility and desire to serve God *after* the moment of crisis has passed. I think Mordecai's vision of himself as a dragon saved by Esther is his true self-image.

9. Esther C:23-25
10. Psalm 46:5

SNAPSHOTS OF THE TRINITY IN THE FOUR GOSPELS: Parts I and II

Sr. Mary (Margaret) Emmanuella, O.P.
Farmington Hills, MI

The origin of this paper is a community project in 1999, the year of the Father in preparation for the Holy Year celebration. Several of us had chosen a scripture text to search out the image of God portrayed therein. I chose Matthew's Gospel—for no particular reason—but what I found was so overwhelmingly beautiful and so unexpected that I was literally left spellbound. This was the first time I had ever read Matthew's Gospel in a single sitting, trying to see Matthew in himself, bracketed, as it were, from my previous memories and impressions and separated from the other Gospel accounts. I was so filled with wonder at its beauty, I felt I had discovered a gold mine. If Luke's Gospel is—as they say—the Gospel of the Holy Spirit, Matthew's Gospel might be named the Gospel of the Father, the Father being given special prominence by Matthew.

These thoughts led to my musing about all three synoptics. I began to wonder if we could not find a Trinitarian complementarity in the first three Gospels, making Mark's in a special way the Gospel of the Son of God. And how was Luke's Gospel the Gospel of the Holy Spirit? What treasures would I discover if I searched it out myself? And if the three earliest Gospels did yield a triune understanding of the mystery of Jesus, what of John's Gospel? Is it also Trinitarian in outlook? This essay presents my findings.

For each of the four Gospels I followed the same procedure: a fresh reading in a single sitting, allowing the flavor of each to penetrate my consciousness. Only then did I begin to grapple with the texts and to turn to commentaries and other sources to check out my ideas, decipher the questions raised and further clarify my thoughts.

Part I: The Father in Matthew's Gospel

Matthew's Gospel may be called the "Gospel of the Father." God as "Father." Fatherhood is painted in high relief by St. Matthew. Further, he had a particular and precise image of who a father is and what role he plays that weaves in and out of his narrative. Why would this be so? Maybe, in part, it is because Matthew is a Jew and writing for Jews. His purpose is to show how the scriptures are fulfilled in Jesus. He looks to the past, therefore, in order to ground his faith—our faith—in Jesus as Messiah, the Promised One. In a Jewish setting, fatherhood is important. Ancient Judaism was—perhaps still is—a patriarchal society. Primacy of place is accorded the father: head of the family, of the household, the clan, the tribe, the nation. The very unity of Israel as a nation was bound together in the authority of the father. For example, socially: everyone knew who he was by who his father or ancestor was; the wife by her husband whose family she joined. Economically, the tenure of the land was

determined by units ultimately traced back to the head, the father. You will remember the jubilee celebration. If anyone had sold land or lost it, it was returned at the time of jubilee. Or the story of Naboth who refused to sell his ancestral heritage to Ahab. Theologically, the experience and presentation of the covenantal relationship to God was traced through this same patriarchal structure.¹ We could say that the whole of Old Testament revelation (with few exceptions when women were mentioned) was handed on and linked together through the patriarchs, the fathers, over whom, ultimately, God himself presided.

While not frequently called "Father" in the Old Testament for fear of misinterpretation—God is not our father physically through procreation or in the Greek mythological sense by which certain heroes were descendants of the gods²—God is our Father metaphorically: by creation, by election and the covenant, by his love and care for us.³ This is the backdrop of Matthew's Gospel. It draws heavily on traditional Jewish patriarchy. There is a certain majesty and nobility about it, an order and structure expected of one steeped in his Jewish heritage.

The Marks of Fatherhood

In the Bible, Old Testament and New, paternity is symbolized by strength, fidelity, protection and mystery.⁴ The four are interrelated. We will see these characteristics carefully represented in Matthew's Gospel. Let us begin.

The Gospel opens with a genealogy, a solemn record of the origin of Jesus Christ. The name "father" means origin or source. The constant refrain, "so and so begot so and so... so and so begot so and so ... so and so begot so and so ..." implies the constant presence of God throughout Israel's history.⁵ That is fidelity. God's faithfulness, even in the face of human sinfulness, the people's falling away. The covenant was handed on from generation to generation, from Abraham, the father of the Chosen People, to David, through the Babylonian captivity, to now. *Genuit*. Begot. *Egennesen*. Became the father of. Fatherhood for the Jew, while a symbol of strength and protection, an all-pervasive presence, is not for all that overbearing. Nor is it self-seeking. Biblically, even in the Old Testament, authority vested in the father, is given for the sake of others, for their growth and increase. As one listens to the litany of "so and so begot so and so ...", the emphasis is on the begotten son, not the father. The father recedes into the background as the son is brought to light. Fatherhood is thus symbolized by mystery, obscurity.

Secondly, we come to the Infancy narrative. The genealogy concludes with an account of the birth of Jesus. St. Matthew is the only evangelist that gives prominence to St. Joseph. St. Luke identifies Joseph as the husband of Mary but does not give him prominence. Luke recounts the birth of Jesus from Mary's point of view. Matthew tells the story from a paternal perspective; he tells Joseph's story. Throughout the Infancy narrative, St. Joseph displays to a remarkable degree the four biblical qualities of paternity. First, there is fidelity: to the Law, by accepting the title of legal father of Jesus; to Mary, in not wishing to expose her; to grace, by listening attentively to the voice

within. St. Joseph is a just man. Then we have strength and protection: It is St. Joseph who is in charge of bringing the Holy Family to Bethlehem and back to Nazareth. It is St. Joseph who gives Jesus his name. When the Child is threatened, it is St. Joseph who is warned in a dream. Finally, mystery: St. Joseph is that veil of obscurity behind which Jesus and Mary are hidden. He himself is humble, unobtrusive, discreetly silent. Not one word of his is recorded in the Scriptures yet his presence was a necessary part of the heavenly Father's plan to conceal Mary's virginity and the greatness of her Son. The presence of St. Joseph in the Infancy narrative is a second revelation of the heavenly Father.⁶ Jesus himself would have called him "Abba," "Daddy," countless times before it was recounted that he referred to God by that intimate and familiar term. By that time, Joseph had disappeared, seemingly to clear the way for the ultimate revelation of the heavenly Father.⁷

Matthew's portrayal of God as Father continues to unfold as Jesus enters his public life. The first announcement of the good news in Matthew is "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand" (3:2)⁸ Where Matthew says kingdom of *heaven*, Mark uses "reign of God." Matthew's substitution of the word "heaven" for "God" is in the typically Jewish fashion of reverence for God's name. Later, when he does begin to refer to God as "Father," he will almost always modify that term of intimacy with "heavenly," "heavenly Father." Reverence, awe, a sense of the transcendent, these are all variations on the theme of mystery in the biblical notion of paternity. The father is set apart, over the others, seemingly inaccessible, hidden. However, very quickly, in the Sermon on the Mount, which follows next, the terminology has already shifted. Early on in the Sermon, Matthew uses "reign of God" or "kingdom of God" and we are to become "children of God." Then, almost immediately, Matthew begins to refer to God with the beautiful title of "Father."

The Sermon on the Mount

The Sermon on the Mount (5:1-7:27) is the apex of Matthew's Gospel. It can be said—it has been said—that the Sermon on the Mount is a compendium of the entire Gospel. These few chapters contain the whole Law and the Prophets—the Old Testament—and their fulfillment—the New Testament. All of it is summarized in the Sermon on the Mount. Within the Sermon, the Lord's Prayer is central, like a jewel in its setting. The Our Father, in turn, is a compendium of the entire Sermon and a further distillation of the entire Gospel message. Its seven short petitions contain the message of Christianity in a nutshell. St. Thomas, and others, say the Lord's Prayer is a perfect prayer, containing everything. Nothing is lacking. It establishes a perfect relationship with God. It tells us who God is and who we are and what is important in life. Then, if we continue to press more deeply into the meaning of the Lord's Prayer to allow its richness to emerge even more fully and if we allow our attention to converge on a single thought, one word that captures its essence, that one word is "Father." The single word "Father," for Matthew, is the focal point of all salvation history, of our faith. The one word, "Father," *our* Father, our *heavenly* Father, sums up everything. Your kingdom come, your will be done: The greatness of God, his beauty, his majesty...Give us—it is not ours, we cannot "earn" it—Give us today, Our Father, you who know what is best

for us, give us today our daily bread: His care, his protection, his love. Forgive—we are all sinners, in need of grace. As we also forgive—love of neighbor is equal to love of God. We are brothers and sisters *because* we have one Father, *our* Father. It is because God is our Father that we are called to transcend every difference among us. Lead us not into temptation—another recognition that it is God, our Father, who arranges and prepares every moment of our lives with a Father's care. Life itself is a trial but God is with us, our Father.

Let us back up now and look at the whole of the Sermon on the Mount and point out other individual passages that unveil God as our Father. First of all, we said that the Sermon is a compendium of the entire Gospel. For Matthew, the essence of the Gospel is holiness—union with God—and the Sermon is a blueprint for holiness. Unlike Luke's Gospel on the plain which was addressed to the materially poor communities of Asia Minor and Greece with a promise of future reversal of fortune, Matthew is concerned with an individual and personal relationship with God whom he names "Father." He speaks to the *anawim*, the remnant of Israel, the *spiritually* poor, and announces happiness of heart, inner peace to those who accept the kingdom interiorly as a new kind of relationship to God. It is because God is our Father that we are inspired to a relationship of absolute trust and confidence as well as to an emptying of self-leading to a condition of childlike dependence and an attitude of universal charity which embraces all others as brothers and sisters because we are children of the one same Father.

The Sermon on the Mount may be broken up into segments. The first, the Beatitudes (5:1-12), is an introduction to the whole: "How happy are the poor, the gentle, those thirsting after righteousness," etc. A second segment consists in a series of images: of salt, of light, of comparisons between the Old Law and the New. Matthew's purpose is to point out the continuum between the two, in which the Old Law is brought to ultimate completion in the New. Anger, impurity, divorce, the taking of oaths, retaliation, and regard of the non-Jew as enemy—all of these are transformed in the new way of life proposed by the Sermon on the Mount. This second section concludes with the incisive admonition, "You must, therefore, be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48). In other words, the message of the Sermon on the Mount is that God is perfect in love and has willed to be our Father. This same love is the New Law of Christ that has become the center of an entirely new way of life inspiring the activity of the followers of Jesus.⁹

A third section of the Sermon seems a consequence of this new relationship with God and is an invitation to interiority, that secret place within where only God, my Father, and I may enter. Listen to the banter. It is found only in Matthew's Gospel. "Be careful not to parade your good deeds before [*people*] to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward *from your heavenly Father*" (6:1-2). "Your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you" (6:4). "When you pray, go to your private room and ... pray in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you" (6:4). "If *you* forgive others their failings, your heavenly Father will forgive you yours" (6:14). "When you fast do not

put on a gloomy look ... to let [others] know ... [N]o one [must] know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you" (6:16-18). There is almost a playfulness in the text, a kind of hide and seek.

Matthew speaks of heavenly treasure in the heart, of giving oneself over to God's love and care. "Look at the birds...Your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much than they are?" (6:26). "Do not worry...Your heavenly Father knows [all] you need" (6:31.33). Summing up, only those who "[do] the will of my Father in heaven will enter the kingdom of heaven" (7:21). If one has been listening carefully, all the strains of the Lord's Prayer were replayed: forgiveness and trust in God for our daily bread, zeal for his honor and glory, the accomplishment of his will, and most of all, his name, Father. Finally, putting all these words of Jesus into practice means building one's house on solid rock, the rock of God's fidelity, the rock of his strength and protection that will withstand every storm of wind or rain, the rock of mystery, discovering one's own inner self in God untouched by external circumstances.

We are ready now for the public life of Jesus. The same substructure of Jewish paternity undergirds the whole of Matthew's version of the Good News. Forty-one times he cites the Old Testament. Thirty-seven of these texts are introduced with the formula, "that it might be fulfilled." Matthew's idea of fulfillment is not the idea of the fulfillment of a prediction but of the growth of a reality to its destined fullness.¹⁰ Already we have the image of fatherhood, that is, source; and authority, that is, increase and growth for others. We can read paternity between the lines: a hidden fruitfulness, a mysterious blossoming forth of a reality hidden for all ages, foreshadowed in the Old Testament, brought to light in the New.

So far as individual texts are concerned, once we get past the Sermon on the Mount there are only a few distinct references to God as Father which become evident by comparison with the other synoptics but these few are significant. For example, Matthew (10:29) reads "Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing." Luke (12:24) has a similar passage: "Think of the ravens. They do not sow or reap...yet God feeds them." Matthew personalizes. He gives a name to God: "Father." Again, Matthew (12:46-50): "Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven...is my brother and sister and mother..." Luke and Mark say "the will of God" or "the word of God."

Jesus Our Father

The beautiful passage of Matthew (11:25-27), "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth..." is found word for word in Luke (10:21-22). But Matthew adds "Come to me, all you who labor and are overburdened, and I will give you rest" (28-30). While he does not directly mention God as Father, he does present Jesus acting in a fatherly way: the easy yoke, the light burden, the giving of rest. Only Matthew says, "He took our sicknesses away and carried our diseases for us" (8:17). Or, in a reference to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, "He will not brawl or shout ... he will not break the

crushed reed, nor put out the smoldering wick [fidelity and compassion, or protection] till he has led the truth to victory" [strength] (12:19-21). This passage too is found only in Matthew.

A perfect description of biblical authority and thus paternity, while found in all four Gospels and not in Matthew alone, is nevertheless so central to Matthew's overall theme that it cannot be omitted here. In 20:25-26, Matthew contrasts the authority of the Gentiles with that to be practiced by the followers of Jesus. The greats among the Gentiles make their importance felt. But it cannot be that way with us. For us, leadership is service after the example of Jesus who came not to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many: Fatherhood.

Another function of parenthood is teaching. More than either Mark or Luke, Matthew casts Jesus in the role of teacher. Thus, the many parables and the prolonged explanation of parables. In 23:8-11, we are admonished to call no one on earth Rabbi or teacher or father. We have only one father, our Father in heaven, one teacher, the Christ. Again, Matthew is establishing a relationship between ourselves and God as our Father.

Matthew (22:1-14) tells the story of a king who gave a marriage banquet for his son. Luke (14:16-24) recounts the same parable but in Luke it is simply a man who gave a banquet. Matthew personalizes far more than Luke. The king is a father-figure for the Jew. The banquet is a marriage feast and for the king's son. There is a father-son relational dimension in Matthew not found in Luke.

All three synoptics tell us not to worry about what to say when brought to trial but only Matthew draws our attention to the Father. Mark says, "It is not you who will be speaking: it will be the Holy Spirit" (13:11). And Luke, "The Holy Spirit will teach you what you must say" (12:12). But Matthew says, "The Spirit of your Father will be speaking in you" (10:20). Both Matthew (18:10-14) and Luke (15:3-7) recount the parable of the lost sheep and the owner leaving the ninety-nine to search for the stray. But while Luke speaks of the joy in heaven over a repentant sinner, Matthew recalls that "it is never the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should be lost."

Only Matthew (25:31-46) shows us the separation of sheep and goats at the Last Judgment and the Father's welcome: "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world." All three synoptics tell us of Peter's confession of faith (Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30; Lk 9:18ff) but only in Matthew was that faith recognized as "revealed by my Father in heaven" and only in Matthew is the Church built upon the rock of Peter's faith and the promise given that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. These are all father symbols: fidelity, strength, protection and mystery. Faith here is defined as mystery, revealed interiorly, given by and pointing to the Father.

Jesus' Devotion to his Father

We come then to the Passion narratives. At the Last Supper, Matthew (26:29) has Jesus say, "I shall not drink wine until I drink the new wine with you in the kingdom of my Father." Mark (14:25) and Luke (22:18) say "kingdom of God." At the agony in the garden, Matthew (26:39) adds the personal pronoun "my"—"My Father, if it is possible let this cup pass me by." Mark (14:36) and Luke (22:42) simply say "Father." On the cross, Jesus is shown in agony and dereliction at his fate yet praying to his Father in utter trust and confidence that he will be heard. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? You are far from my plea and the cry of my distress... Yet, you, O God, are holy... In you our fathers put their trust and you set them free..." (27:46).¹¹ Only the opening verse of Psalm 22 is repeated by Matthew but commentators suggest that the whole psalm was probably recited by Jesus on the cross. At any rate, the early Church did recognize Psalm 22 as one of the Passion psalms. Let us not forget that it ends on a note of praise and thanksgiving. We may see Jesus depicted as the perfect Son of an all-loving Father, the ultimate expression of what it means to build one's life (one's house) on the rock of God's fidelity, and love, and protection. No matter what storms and wind and rain lash against it, even death itself, cruel death inspired by hate, it has no power to destroy. Or rather, having destroyed the body, it cannot destroy the soul. The last word, the final word, is resurrection and new life in God.

Finally, in the resurrection narrative, only Matthew (28:18) speaks of authority—a father's prerogative. "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." Only Matthew (28:19) mentions the Father's name: "Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Only Matthew enjoins the disciples to teach what has been commanded. Again, a subtle reference to God as Father.

Conclusion of Part I

And so, we conclude our journey through Matthew's Gospel. We have become more aware, perhaps, of the patriarchal structure of Jewish life which has had a major influence on Matthew's theological vision, inspiring him to root our faith in the beginnings, the source, that is, in God himself as Father. We have walked through the genealogy and felt the Father's abiding presence throughout history. We have glimpsed his image in St. Joseph, given to Jesus as model and protector. We have noted over and over the four marks of biblical paternity: strength, fidelity, protection and mystery. Shifting now, we have learned with Matthew that faith and/or holiness is relational, a point of contact between God our Father and ourselves, hidden from others as well as to be shared with others. We may be small and poor, in sorrow, insulted, even persecuted and killed, yet cared for by a Father infinitely greater than we and who loves us and protects us through whatever pain life deals us. We have witnessed Jesus' own love for the Father and his utter trust and confidence even on the cross. And we have met Jesus in the role of father, teaching, serving and laying down his life for others. Finally, the motive Matthew gives us to practice a like universal love which excludes no one is our new status as children of God, making us all brothers and sisters in the one Father who makes his sun to shine, his rain to fall, on good and bad alike.

Matthew's Gospel is a Gospel of the Father and of the Father's love for each of us. May we come to know that Father's love ever more fully, now and throughout eternity.

Part II: The Holy Spirit in Luke's Gospel and Acts of the Apostles

When we turn to Luke's Gospel, a quite different image comes into focus. The touchstone of Matthew's Gospel is God our Father as mirrored in the Old Testament; Luke's guiding vision is the Holy Spirit, pressing us into the future. Each synoptic tells the same story but to his own audience, with differing panoramas of theological vision, color and emphasis. Matthew wrote his gospel for the Jewish communities among the early Christians; Luke for the pagans. Matthew preserves the hierarchical structure of the Chosen People; Luke's message is of universal salvation. Matthew presents the Good News to his fellow country folk in terms they can appreciate and understand. He looks back to the sacred writings to demonstrate that the law and prophets find fulfillment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Luke also makes use of the Jewish scriptures but for a different reason. Luke recognizes, with Matthew, that the scriptures are fulfilled in Jesus but his purpose is to encourage the converts from paganism in their new-found faith. Himself of Gentile origin, Luke's intent is to draw these new believers into the sacred history, graft them on, as it were, as co-heirs of the sacred promises. Luke Timothy Johnson explains that these Gentile converts were troubled by the defection of the Jews and feared that God could not be trusted.¹² Luke's Gospel, together with Acts, is a kind of *apologia* of God's fidelity which will remain with us until the end of time. By rooting Jesus' story in that of Israel's, Luke is able to illustrate that God was faithful to the Jews and fulfilled his promises; only then were the blessings extended to the Gentiles.¹³

Lukan Themes are Themes of the Holy Spirit

The first thing I noted as I fixed my gaze on Luke's Gospel is that its multiple themes are likewise themes generally associated with the Holy Spirit. There are many tender, maternal images of loving kindness that warm and comfort; and further images of the life-giving Spirit brooding as it were over the waters of creation. In Luke's Gospel Our Savior is shown to be gentle and compassionate toward the poor, the humble and distressed. Only in Luke does Jesus heal the ear cut off so rashly by Peter in the Garden (22:51). Luke also softens or omits the harsher sayings of Matthew and Mark. For example, there is no cursing of a fig tree as in Matthew. Instead, a story is told of the same barren fig tree that accentuates Jesus' patience and invites to repentance. Mercy and repentance are generally associated with the Holy Spirit. Luke's Gospel is the Gospel of the Great Pardons¹⁴ with its many parables of forgiveness: the lost sheep, the lost coin, the prodigal son (15:1-31); the penitent woman (7:36-50); the good thief (23:43); the look that moved Peter to repentance (22:61). We think of the Holy Spirit when we think of forgiveness, a powerful work of recreating light from darkness, drawing good out of evil, transforming death into life, renewing the face of the earth. And then there is the universal call to salvation so characteristic of Luke's Gospel. From

its first pages to the last of Acts, all humankind is included. This, too, is one more mark of the Spirit. All of these themes, reflected in Luke's version of the Good News, make it the Gospel of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the unseen dynamic agent in Luke's story, inspiring, prompting, directing, guiding all the events to their predestined end.¹⁵ We feel his divine presence in the joy, the praise, the gratitude with which the Gospel abounds. Elizabeth, on hearing Mary's voice, was filled with the Holy Spirit and the baby in her womb leapt for joy (1:41.44). Mary herself overflowed with gratitude at the mighty works of God accomplished in her (1:46-55). Zechariah, Simeon, Anna, the shepherds, each in turn recognizing the Gift of God, break forth in a hymn of praise. Joyful praise, resounding throughout the pages of the Gospel and Acts, is accompanied by a sense of wonder which precedes and an abiding peace which follows, even in the midst of hardship. Each of the characters mentioned here experienced initially a sense of awe if not outright terror at the unexpected manifestation of the divine. Mary was deeply disturbed at the message of the angel and asked how this could be (1:35). Zechariah was overcome with fear (1:12); the shepherds were terrified (2:10). And while the text does not explicate that there was religious dread in the case of Elizabeth, Simeon or Anna, it does indicate an earlier revelation that constrained them to seclude themselves in fasting and prayer, in longing and anticipation, in order to prepare for the fulfillment of the promise (1:25; 2:26.37). All of the interior human movements mentioned here—the joy and the fear, the longing, the fasting and the anticipation—may be linked to one or other of the gifts or fruits of the Holy Spirit; another reason why Luke's Gospel and Acts, both, may be named the Gospel of the Holy Spirit. This is the second impression I had of Luke's Gospel. All of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are in full operation, making his vision one of transformed, divinized human life. The Holy Spirit is not always named but he is the unseen presence at work touching hearts, forming the first believers, guiding the course of human history and of individual lives.

The Holy Spirit and the New Creation

For Luke, Jesus is entirely and uniquely possessed by the Holy Spirit, filled with the Holy Spirit, led by the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit by whom he was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary overshadows him again at his baptism to inaugurate his mission and yet again at the transfiguration as he prepares himself to face his passion. Later it will descend in the same way at Pentecost upon the newborn Church and yet again later upon the first Gentile believers. These parallelisms are not unintended by Luke. They are borrowed from Old Testament Spirit imagery and carry his great theme of the power of the Holy Spirit, life-giving, energizing, transforming. Each key moment in the life of Jesus—as also of the Christian community, recounted in Acts—repeats the same pattern. Each is a new creation marked by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comes down, hovers over, rests upon, and all that he touches is sparked with life anew; each action more abundant, deeper and more far-reaching.

Luke places the entire life of Jesus under the aegis of the Holy Spirit. We read in the Acts of the Apostles, "God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power,

and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil" (Acts 10:38). Matthew and Mark only implicitly recognize the Holy Spirit at work in Jesus' public ministry. They too recount the theophany at the baptism and state that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert. They too understand the great sin of rejection of Jesus as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mk 3:29; Mt 12:31). And Matthew, at least, reports that the birth of Jesus came about by the power of the Holy Spirit (Mt 1:18). But Luke goes further. His theology is more developed. His references to the Spirit are more numerous and more explicit. Luke consistently refers to the Holy Spirit as inner motive and energizing principle at work in Jesus and bringing to birth the entire Christian mystery.

The Prophetic Spirit

If the Spirit's activity is hidden and mysteriously fruitful, prophecy is its outward manifestation. As Luke uses the images of overshadowing and new birth to describe the inner dynamism of God's presence among us, he now reaches back again into Old Testament typology and borrows the idea of prophecy to demonstrate its external appearance. By definition, a prophet is one who is on intimate terms with God, knows God's secret thoughts and is himself the personification of the engagement of God with the people. It is the task of the prophet to deliver God's message of hope, of consolation, of salvation, on the one hand; and, on the other, to recall the people to God by summoning them to holiness, to conversion and to a change of heart. The prophet is a kind of sacrament of the Holy Spirit, the outward sign of the birthing of divine life in the people.

Throughout Luke's narrative, Jesus is referred to as a prophet. He is "The Great Prophet" long foretold and awaited as the fullness of divine grace in human flesh (cf. Dt 18:15.18). The first Christian *kerygma* describes Jesus in terms reminiscent of Moses, the great Liberator,¹⁶ the meekest man on earth, who saw God face to face, a man sent by God but rejected by the people (Acts 3:22; 7:37). At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus assumes the role of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me," he says. "He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor..." (4:18. cf. Is 61:1-2). Jesus compares himself to Elijah and Elisha (4:25-27) and when he works miracles like theirs—raising the dead, cleansing lepers—the response of the people is explicit: "A great prophet has appeared among us. God has visited his people" (7:16). The disciples on their way to Emmaus declare that "Jesus was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people" (24:19). He is also the prophet that cannot be accepted in his own country (cf. 4:24). The prophetic message proves to be a cause of division and a sign of contradiction. In the end he is rejected by the chief priests and put to death.

Later, in Acts, the apostles themselves, following in Jesus' footsteps, imbibing his grace and example, although not called prophets, are nevertheless described in terms that suggest the image of a prophet.¹⁷ They are filled with the Spirit and bold in their proclamation of the Good News. They are witnesses of God's mighty work in raising Jesus from the dead. They work signs and wonders among all the people. And

they preach repentance and forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. Ultimately, *all* the people are to be prophets. "I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind [it is the Lord who speaks]. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams...Even on my slaves, men and women, in those days, I will pour out my Spirit" (Acts 2:17-18. cf. Jl 3:1-5). Prophecy is one more sign of the Spirit's presence among us. It is the Holy Spirit who speaks through the prophets. And it is the prophet who bears the Spirit and embodies the Spirit in action.

Holiness

The inner essence of the prophetic charism, however, is the more fundamental quality of holiness, intimate union with God. That Luke places such emphasis on Jesus' holiness is one more indirect reference to the Holy Spirit. "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you," the angel says to Mary. "And so the child will be holy and will be called the Son of God" (1:35). At his death, the centurion in both Matthew and Mark says, "In truth this was a Son of God" (Mt 27:54; Mk 15:39). Only Luke defines what that means in human terms: "Truly this was a great and good man" (23:48). Acts too refers to Jesus as the Holy One, the Just One (3:14), the holy servant [of God] (4:27.30). Jesus is the Holy One *par excellence*. The quality of goodness, of holiness, in Jesus is an outstanding trait of Luke's Gospel. Ultimately, sanctification is *the* work of the Holy Spirit, demonstrating in human terms his role as bond of unity and love between Father and Son. Only Luke explicitly attributes to the Holy Spirit the profound and exultant expression of Jesus' complete personal union with the Father. Jesus, "*filled with joy by the Holy Spirit*,...said, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever...Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father...'" (10:21-22). Matthew recounts the same passage but does not include the reference to the Holy Spirit (Mt 11:25-27).

Luke speaks of Jesus at prayer many times more often than does either Matthew or Mark. Prayer is the avenue to union with God, one more hidden pointer to the Holy Spirit. At each important moment Jesus is found at prayer. Only Luke mentions that Jesus was found at prayer following his baptism when the heavens opened and the Father's voice was heard (3:21). Before the choice of his disciples he spent the whole night in prayer (6:12). He was again at prayer when he put the question of his identity to his disciples and received Peter's confession of faith (9:18). Jesus prayed at his transfiguration, in the garden, on the Cross for his executioners. His final act, in Luke's Gospel, was a prayer of surrender. "'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.' With these words he breathed his last" (23:46-47). In Luke's Gospel, Jesus not only taught his disciples to pray, as does Matthew, but he prayed for them (22:32) and recommended prayer to them, persevering prayer that does not give up in the face of seeming refusal but continues to plead until one's requests are granted. Only Luke tells the stories of the importunate friend who kept begging until he received what he wanted (11:5-8); and of the widow who continued to plead with the judge until he granted her wishes (18:1-8). And only Luke mentions explicitly that the Holy Spirit is the best gift surpassing all expectations (11:13).

In Luke's account of the baptism, the voice of the Father is addressed directly to Jesus, "*You* are my Son... My favor rests upon you" (3:22), making the account more intimate than Matthew's more formal "*This* is my Son." Immediately there follows a genealogy which begins "Jesus... being the son, as it was thought, of Joseph, son of Heli, son of ... son of... [and ending] son of Adam, son of God" (3:23-38). Coming at this precise moment, the genealogy seems to pick up the word "son" and re-echo it back through the ages to the very bosom of the Father. It is, in its own way, a prolongation of the baptismal theophany. "You are my Son, the Beloved; my favor [one might read 'my Spirit'] rests upon you"—as indeed it did in bodily form. To be God's Son and to be possessed by the Spirit are, in fact, identical.¹⁸ They are complementary aspects of a single reality, holiness.

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Before going on, it may be good to pause for a moment to check our course and to glance back at the terrain just covered. We have seen how it is possible to project each of Luke's images of Jesus onto another screen which reveals the Holy Spirit as well, especially under the titles of new life, prophecy and holiness. If we now sharpen our awareness and allow the brightness of that light to be refracted through the words and deeds of Jesus and his devoted followers, an entire array of the gifts of the Holy Spirit splashes across the horizon like a rainbow on a cloudy day. Or perhaps we may say, each click of the camera gives fresh illumination into the workings of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian people.

According to St. Thomas, holiness indicates not only complete dedication to God but reflects divinity in action by displaying the practice of every human virtue to an heroic degree, heroic meaning beyond our limited human capacity to perform.¹⁹ In other words, divinely human activity is possible only when the Holy Spirit takes such complete possession of our entire being that all we do and think and are, are his as well, are performed under his influence and guided by his inspiration. That the Messiah would be so divinely led is revealed in Isaiah (11:2): "On him the Spirit of the Lord rests, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and power, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord [and of piety]." Throughout his Gospel and Acts, Luke shows us what life in the Spirit means, what it means to allow divinity to shine through our human nature. Each gift of the Holy Spirit is represented, touching and transforming every aspect of human life.

Wisdom

Already in his childhood, Luke tells us, Jesus was filled with wisdom and God's favor was with him (1:40). He was consumed with zeal for his Father's house (cf. 2:49) and those who heard him were astonished at his intelligence and his replies (2:48). In his public life we hear that he won the approval of all because of the gracious words that fell from his lips (4:22). His goodness, his mildness, his courtesy, his gentleness, his compassion and mercy, so evident in Luke's Gospel, are all reflections of God's loving kindness, are all effects of God's Spirit in him. The exultant tones of joy that ring

repeatedly on almost every page are also indicative of the gift of wisdom. "Wisdom... deploys her strength from one end of the earth to the other, ordering all things for good" (Wis. 8:1).

Peace is another of the fruits of wisdom that pervades Luke's Gospel, from the songs of the angels (2:14) to the triumphal entry into Jerusalem (19:38) to the greetings to the disciples after the resurrection (24:36). It accompanies Jesus' words of forgiveness (7:48; 8:48) and complements the progress of the early Church in the fear of the Lord and the increased consolation of the Holy Spirit in Acts (9:31). At his death, Jesus himself radiated peace. "Do not weep for me," he says to the women, "weep rather for yourselves and for your children" (23:28). To the good thief he says, "Today you will be with me in paradise" (23:43). And for those who crucified him he prayed, "Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing" (23:34). There is no useless preoccupation with self here, no self-pity. Rather, even in the midst of physical and mental anguish, Jesus was in such possession of himself and so God-centered, as to be able to reach out to comfort others. John tells us that to see Jesus is to see the Father; but for Luke, to see Jesus is to know the power of the transforming Spirit.

In Acts, the martyrdom of Jesus is repeated by that of Stephen. Stephen too was filled with grace and power (6:8); he too spoke with wisdom because the Spirit prompted what he said (6:10); his face appeared like that of an angel (6:15); and when he was killed his dying words were, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (7:60). Luke tells us directly that Jesus possessed the gift of wisdom when he attributes to Jesus a role that Matthew and Mark, and Luke himself in other places, give to the Holy Spirit. "I myself shall give you an eloquence and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist" (21:15). Luke is telling us that Jesus is so filled with the Spirit's gift of wisdom that he can communicate it to his followers.

Fortitude

The wisdom of Jesus is most manifest in his love for the cross which is closely aligned to the Spirit's gift of fortitude. The language of the cross is wiser than human wisdom, stronger than human strength (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18,25). The mystery of the cross is luminous in Luke's Gospel and is referred to more frequently than by either Matthew or Mark. Only Luke has Jesus longing for the baptism of suffering he must receive (12:50), longing to eat the Passover supper with his disciples before he died (22:15). In Luke, Jesus faces his cross and teaches his disciples to face it with courage, even joy. Only Luke's Jesus tells his disciples, "Your endurance will win you your lives" (21:19) and that in the face of disaster they should "stand erect, hold your heads high because your liberation is near at hand" (21:28). Further, they should pray "for the strength to survive all that is to happen and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man" (21:36). Only in Luke's account of the agony in the garden does Jesus struggle so intensely that he sweats blood and only in Luke does an angel—an angel, who in many Old Testament passages, refers to the presence of God himself—appear to give Jesus strength. These are all examples of the gift of fortitude, heroic fortitude, divinized human strength, beyond our human powers to accomplish. Acts, too, contains several references to courage, encouragement (e.g., 14:22; 15:32; 18:23) and joy in the face

of hardship (5:41) as well as that boldness in the face of danger that is characteristic of the gift of fortitude. "The apostles proclaim the Word of God boldly" (4:31).

Understanding

The mystery of the cross is an obstacle to Jews, madness to the Gentiles but to those who have been called it is the power and the wisdom of God (cf. 1 Cor. 1:24). So far beyond human logic is it that to grasp this truth requires the Spirit's gift of understanding. To understand is another key concept in Luke's Gospel. In the Infancy narrative we read that his parents did not understand (2:50). Nor did the disciples understand what Jesus meant by his coming suffering and death (18:34). But they were given to understand after Jesus rose from the dead. And Mary, by treasuring all these things, pondering them in her heart, was preparing herself to receive the Spirit's gift of understanding. As for the disciples, Jesus himself appeared to them on the road to Emmaus and opened the scriptures to them. "Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?" (24:26.45). A similar scene is recounted of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts (8:26-40). The many speeches in Acts (nine in the first eight chapters, as well as those throughout the remainder of the book) interpret the story for us. They put us in touch with the mystery that so captured their minds and hearts as it was unveiled to them: that the Christ *had* to die and *thus* rise from the dead. The fact that so astounded and filled the first believers with joy beyond all telling was the realization that all of the scriptures foretold this event, that it was intended by God and leads to glorification. This enlightenment of the mind to penetrate the blinding effects of God's mighty works on our feeble human minds is wrought in us by the gift of understanding.

Counsel

If the gift of understanding illumines our faith, the gift of counsel prompts us to do what is practically necessary to make it effective in our lives. Thus, it can only be the Spirit of counsel at work in him that made Jesus *resolutely* take the road to Jerusalem even though he knew that certain death awaited him there (9:51). Likewise, it was because Paul listened to the Spirit's counsel that he could not be dissuaded from returning to that same city where he had already been warned that imprisonment and persecution would be his lot (20:22; 21:13). Perhaps it was the Spirit's gift of counsel that moved the Child Jesus to remain behind in Jerusalem while his parents searched for him (2:43) and Zacchaeus to climb the sycamore tree in order to see Jesus as he passed by (19:41). Most certainly it was the gift of counsel that brought Simeon and Anna to the temple to meet the Infant Christ (2:27.38) and John to leap in his mother's womb while Elizabeth, moved by that same Spirit, cried out, "Why should I be honored with a visit from the mother of my Lord?" (1:39.43).

In Acts, it was the Holy Spirit that prompted Philip to meet the Ethiopian's chariot (8:29) and brought Peter and Cornelius together (10:1-48), that prepared the way for Ananias to welcome Paul (9:10ff), that guided Paul along the route of the missionary journeys (13:2; 16:7; 18:9-10; 23:11). It was by the Spirit's gift of counsel that Peter proposed the election by which Matthias was chosen to replace the defecting Judas

(1:21) and perceived the fraud of Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-11), that the twelve together instituted the order of deacons (6:2ff), and that the first Council of Jerusalem was held (15:2ff).

Knowledge

Although all the gifts of the Holy Spirit are represented in Luke's Gospel, perhaps the most comprehensive is the gift of knowledge. As sin destroyed the harmony between God and humankind, between humankind and the natural creation, between one person and another, so the Messianic age, ushered in by the breath of the Spirit making all things new, has restored that harmony. The gift of knowledge specifically ensures a correct relationship to the created order. By purifying our hearts, rooting out all selfishness and self-aggrandizement, desire to possess and to dominate, it enables us to perceive both the beauty and the emptiness of the material world—the beauty, because it was fashioned by God, comes forth from his hand and reflects his goodness; the emptiness, because of itself it cannot satisfy the longings of our human hearts which were made to rest in God alone.

Examples of the gift of knowledge abound in Luke's Gospel and in Acts. In the first place, we take note of the "Great Reversal"²⁰ of values that is found only in Luke. "What is thought highly of by men," we hear Jesus say, "is loathsome in the sight of God" (16:15). Or, in the words of Mary's Magnificat, "He has pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich he has sent empty away" (1:52-53). Parables found only in Luke reflect this social upheaval, for example, the story of the poor man Lazarus and the rich man who feasted sumptuously every day. Their roles were reversed in the world to come (16:19-31). Or the parable of another rich man who thought to build bigger barns in which to store his goods only to die that very night (12:16-21). "A man's life is not made secure by what he owns even when he has more than he needs," Jesus warns us (12:15).

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus himself demonstrates the influence of the gift of knowledge when he shows a special sensitivity to the poor and the lowly, the outcasts and those in humble circumstances. Only Luke tells the story of the widow of Nain and that Jesus wept at her plight (7:13). Only Luke tells us that Jesus wept over Jerusalem because it had failed to recognize the time of its visitation (19:41). Where Matthew speaks of the poor in spirit, and of those who hunger and thirst metaphorically for righteousness (Mt 5:1-10), Luke calls blessed those who are really poor, those who hunger in fact (6:20-23) and he continues by warning the rich that they already have their reward and will one day know real hunger (6:24-25).

Conversely, Luke presents a positive view of the world as well. He invites us to make use of time and of our human lives as vessels to receive God's grace, again indicative of the gift of knowledge. Time is sacred to Luke. He takes frequent note of human process and development in the telling of his story. The coming to maturity and the stages of growth recur as a constant refrain throughout the Gospel and Acts. John the Baptist "grew up and his spirit matured" (1:80). "Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man" (2:52). We are told how his reputation spread

(4:14; 4:37; 5:15) and how the response in his own city changed from an initial honor to doubt, then rejection there (4:16-30). In Acts, the successive spread of the Church, the increase of its members and the progressive development of thought regarding the inclusion of the Gentiles are all mapped out for us.

We see the gift of knowledge operative in the social orientation of Luke's Gospel, in his stress on how we live in this world. Only in Luke do those coming to be baptized ask, "What must we do?" and only in Luke does John the Baptist point out the duties of the various classes of people. "If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none...Exact no more than your rate...No intimidation..." (3:10-14). Where Matthew draws our minds above to heavenly realities, Luke plants our feet firmly on the earth in order to transform it. Both Matthew and Luke offer us a similar parable, Matthew of the talents (25:1-14) and Luke of the pounds (19:11-27) given to the servants to trade until the Master's return. But the contexts are different. Matthew's story forms part of his eschatological discourse. He is speaking of end-times and judgment. Luke, rather, wants the disciples to realize that the end is *not* near. Another entire epoch has to elapse before the end. The task at hand is to build the earthly city in the likeness of God. Matthew's reward to the faithful servants is to enter into the joy of the Lord at the wedding banquet of heaven. Luke's reward for fidelity is the government of a number of cities proportionate to the amount of money each had gained. Luke's point is that the task of the disciples is to be bearers of the Spirit to the world itself. In another place (16:8), the children of light are cautioned to become as enterprising for God's glory as the children of this world are for their own pursuits.

Fear of the Lord

All of this requires a great change of heart. Our earthbound values must be reversed and our minds rekindled to enable us to perceive reality as with the eyes of God. The theme of conversion, prominent in all four Gospels, takes on even greater urgency in the Acts of the Apostles. Each of the great apostolic discourses closes with a call to repentance. The pagans are called to conversion by forsaking idols; the Jews by acknowledging Jesus as Lord.²¹ The conversion of Paul is so crucial an event and so paradigmatic in meaning that it is repeated for us three times (9:1-9; 22: 5-16; 26: 10-18). Not every instance of fear of the Lord at work is as dramatic, however, as Paul's being knocked off his horse and blinded for three days.

There is also the sense of wonder mentioned earlier. And there is more. Luke uses the phrase "a great fear overcame them" or its equivalents such as "amazement" or "astounded" or "astonished" some twenty or more times, much more often than do either Matthew or Mark, although these too make note of the awe which overtakes the crowds at the miraculous deeds of Jesus. Only Luke recounts that Peter was so overcome at the miraculous catch of fish that he asks Jesus to depart from him because he (Peter) is a sinful man (5:18-20).

Fear of the Lord is the first of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. By impressing the divine presence so forcibly upon our minds and senses, it takes us out of ourselves and opens

our hearts to receive the plenitude of all the gifts of grace that God wishes to bestow on us. Essentially, fear of the Lord is an awareness of one's own nothingness in the face of God's greatness; or, as with Peter, of one's own sinfulness before God's holiness; or, perhaps even more fundamentally, an acknowledgment of one's status as a creature, dependent upon God for everything. It shatters our self-sufficiency and egoistic pride. "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord," Mary says, "because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid.... Holy is his name" (1:46.49). It is only when one is empty that one is ready to be filled. The parable of the publican and the pharisee, told only by Luke (18:9-14), describes the self-emptying humility that is effected by the gift of fear. The publican went away justified, we are told, while the pharisee, bloated with self-importance, had no need of God's grace and so received none. Another example, again found only in Luke (14:7-11), is the story of the wedding guests who chose the places of honor at the banquet. Jesus teaches us instead that by choosing the lowest place—recognizing one's humble state—one is in a position to receive all good things from God.

Another strain of the gift of fear is detachment from all material comforts. Here too, Luke, more than Matthew or Mark, stresses the completeness of the renunciation required in following the Gospel. For example, in the call of the first disciples, Matthew (4:22) and Mark (1:20) tell us that they left father and boat to follow Jesus. Luke says they left everything (5:11). The same pattern is followed in the call of Matthew. The first two evangelists tell us Matthew got up and followed Jesus (Mt 9:9. Mk 2:14). Only Luke emphasizes that his following of Jesus entailed leaving everything (5:28). Only Luke adds "wife" to the list of renunciations an apostle can be expected to make (18:28; 14:26. Cf. Mt 19:27-29; Mk 10:28-30). And only Luke invites us to count the cost of discipleship ahead of time. "Which of you, intending to build a tower, would not first sit down and work out the cost to see if he had enough to complete it?...What king marching to war against another king would not sit down first and consider whether with ten thousand men he could stand up to the other...with twenty thousand?...In the same way," Jesus tells us, "none of you can be my disciple unless he give up all his possessions" (14:28-33).

Piety

And finally there is the gift of piety which, because it touches on how we relate to our neighbor, perhaps proves the existence of all the others. Piety is first of all a relationship to God, expanding our hearts to receive God's tender love and teaching us to trust in his providential care. Luke repeats Matthew's injunctions on dependence on Providence (Lk 12:22-32; cf. Mt 6:25-33) with only a few differences yet draws the conclusions in a slightly different direction. While Matthew also tells us that as we have received from God, so must we do to others (cf. Mt 7:12; 5:46), Luke is more emphatic. Give without expecting return, Jesus tells us explicitly in Luke (14:12-14 and 6:35). We are to be compassionate as our Father is compassionate (6:36). Matthew has "Be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). Matthew is content to draw our attention back to God as source. Luke presses us forward concretely into fellowship with others. Mary went as quickly as she could to her cousin Elizabeth (1:39).

God's mercy to us exemplified in the parables of the lost coin, the lost sheep, and the prodigal son (15:1-32) is to bear fruit in a like relationship to our neighbor, as for example in the parable of the Good Samaritan (10:29-37), again found only in Luke. The theme of universal salvation, already touched upon earlier and deliberately emphasized by Luke, draws forth yet another manifestation of the gift of piety at work: missionary zeal. As God excludes no one from his provident love and tender mercy, so are we constrained to bring that same love to others. And lastly, there are the idyllic portraits Luke draws of the early Christian communities where all were united heart and soul, where all goods were held in common, where no one was in want and where all remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers (cf. 2:42-47 and 4:32-35).

Conclusion of Part II

As we conclude our brief overview of Luke's Gospel and Acts, several things come to mind. We think of its many themes: of joy and fear and peace and prayer, of repentance and forgiveness and mercy. We think of the Spirit of prophecy and holiness in Jesus constituting him the expected Messiah. And we think of the outpouring of the Spirit animating all the action and guiding the course of events, especially discernible in the Acts of the Apostles and signaling the dawning of the Messianic age. We think of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as the way in which he touches human hearts and draws them into the plan of salvation, portraying a world made holy and at peace with God even as the old order collapses and the persecutions continue.

We think also of further themes that we have not mentioned such as the centrality of Jerusalem and the forward thrust of salvation history, both of which are important elements in Luke's story because they rivet our attention on Jesus who is at once God's definitive gift of loving kindness to the world and the mid-point of all time and ages. Everything converges on Jesus.

But our conclusion, perhaps, must go beyond the facts, important though they are, to the purpose Luke had in mind as he composed his two-volume history of the beginnings of Christianity. If we are to believe Luke Timothy Johnson,²² that purpose was to demonstrate that God is faithful to his promises. God was faithful to Jesus whom he did not abandon to Hades after he was killed but freed him from the pangs of death and established him as Lord and Christ in glory (cf. Acts 2:24-36). God was faithful to the Jews as well. The long descriptions of God's activity through their own long history of law and prophets are given as proof of God's love for the Chosen People. Their falling away is not a sign of rejection but the occasion that allows the entire world access to the gift of salvation. With Jesus, the mystery of death is the prelude to glory; with the Jews, their defection leads to the splendor of a world wide mission to the Gentiles.

And God was faithful to his Church, newly born in the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, in its first critical formative years. It is difficult for us to understand from this distance in time how shocking it was to the first Christians that their fellow Jews could

not accept Jesus as the Messiah. Nor can we comprehend how revolting it was to them to accept the Gentile believers on an equal footing with themselves. Yet the Holy Spirit was with them at this first stage of growth when these two events coincided to create an entirely new People of God, raising up leaders, guiding decisions, enlightening minds to understand, making saints out of sinners, bestowing courage and joy, and increasing the number of the faithful.

Nor need we be afraid that the Holy Spirit is not with us at every successive age of the Church's history, to meet whatever challenges that age brings in its wake. As he was with Jesus and the first believers, so will he be with us. "Do not fear, little flock. It has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom" (Lk 12:32). We may face the future in hope.

Part III: The Son of God in Mark's Gospel

Part IV: Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Gospel of John

Time does not permit the development of Parts III and IV before the publication of this volume of *Dominican Monastic Search*. It can be said by way of anticipation, though, that, if we remove the lens through which we saw the Father in the Gospel of Matthew and that which allowed us to glimpse the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of Luke, our attention will be fixed more immediately on Jesus himself as God's own Son. And we can expect John's Gospel, being the last to be written, to have the most fully developed doctrinal content and to offer the most penetrating insights into the mystery of the Son of God become flesh for our sakes and of his relationship to the Father and the Holy Spirit in the fathomless depths of the Triune God.

(To be continued).

NOTES

1. C.H. J. Wright, "Family" in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Volume 2*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 765.
2. Alois Stoger, "Father" in *Sacramentum Verbi, Volume 1*, ed. Johannes B. Bauer (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 262.
3. Ibid, 262.
4. Andrew Doze, *Saint Joseph, Shadow of the Father*, translated by Florentine Audett, R.J.M. (New York: Alba House, 1992), 62.
5. *The New Testament of the New American Bible*, translated from the original Greek by members of the Catholic Biblical Association of America (New York: Image Books, 1972) page 3, note 1, 2-17.
6. Doze, 2.
7. Doze, 5.

8. Unless otherwise noted, all translations of scriptural texts are taken from *The Jerusalem Bible*, ed. Alexander Jones et al. (New York: Doubleday, 1966).
9. Peter J. Riga, *Be Sons of Your Father* (New York: Alba House, 1969), 58.
10. John L. McKenzie, "The Gospel of Matthew," *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown, et al. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1968), 64.
11. The translation of Psalm 22 is that used in The Liturgy of the Hours, taken from *The Grail* (England, 1963).
12. Luke Timothy Johnson, "Luke-Acts, Book of," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Volume 4*, ed. David Noel Freedman et al. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 405.
13. Johnson, 405.
14. William J. Harrington, O.P., "St Luke," *New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, ed. Reginald C. Fuller et al. (New Jersey: Nelson, 1969), 991.
15. Cf. Johnson, 405: "The most important 'character' in Luke's story is God who never appears but directs the action, and all the narrative unfolds in reference to God."
16. Johnson, 412.
17. Johnson, 411.
18. G. W. H. Lampe, "Holy Spirit" in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Volume 2*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick et al. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 630.
19. Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, 1a2ae. 55-70, on which I am relying in this whole section.
20. Johnson, 417.
21. *The Jerusalem Bible*, page 205, note 3l.
22. Johnson, 405.

THE EXCHANGE

Sr. Mary Vincent, O.P.
Farmington Hills, MI

Our beloved St. Catherine of Siena had a favorite prayer which she repeated over and over again: "Create a clean heart in me, O Lord, renew in me a steadfast spirit." Jesus had been listening to that prayer and desire of her heart. This time He answered in a special way—by actually taking her heart away and giving her His own Heart. It was July eighteenth, 1370. She was twenty-three. She lived with and by that heart for the remainder of her life—ten years. She offered that Heart when she died: "Take the Heart, and press it out upon Your Church."

The exchange of hearts is not just for canonized saints. We sing on New Year's Day, the Octave day of Christmas: "O marvelous Exchange! Man's Creator has become man, born of a virgin. We have been made sharers in the divinity of Christ who humbled Himself to share in our humanity." Really the only purpose of God is to give us His own Heart. There is no other reason for our creation. No other plan or hope. Every suffering of our lives is only to purify us—to turn us, to show us our need that He might create in us a God-life, a new heart with a divine source of energy, of thinking, willing, loving and doing.

But we might ask: "What's wrong with the heart I have?" The simple answer is it is human, and so it is limited. It has a measure, a boundary. Yet God desires to fill and re-create me with Sacred Fullness. With His Heart. And then I go beyond my limits. My heart is also prone to selfishness. It seeks itself, "my" life, "my" well-being, "my" pleasure. With His Heart my center becomes the great I AM. I am in Him and He is in Me. How easy to abide in Him if I have His very own Heart.

When Catherine told Raymond about this exchange he was, as usual, incredulous. She simply answered: "All things are possible with God." That must be our answer, our conviction, too. By patience, obedience, faith, his Great Heart is mine. He offers it. His whole purpose of becoming a human being is to lift us into this divine realm. How can I seek for less? "Come to Me, My burden is easy and My yoke is light." It is light because He is the Heart within us. Beating, beating, beating for every human heart. No matter what a human being has to bear it is only that we gain this other Heart.

A TRINITARIAN MINISTRY: THE "MANDATUM"

Sr. Mary Rose, O.P.
Farmington Hills, MI

In the Gospel of John, Chapter Thirteen—which contains an account of Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet—begins by telling us that our Lord knew his hour had come, and that having loved those who were his own, he would love them to the end. Jesus came to the Passover supper with deep and touching emotion. In Luke's account, he tells the disciples: "O, how I longed to eat this Pasch with you!"

John goes on to say that Jesus was aware that He had come from God and was going back to God, and that the Father had given over everything to him. This reminds us of the Prologue (Jn 1):

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. ...He came from God and His own did not receive Him but to those who believed in Him, He gave the power to become the children of God.

During the supper, he called his disciples little children, his friends, not slaves. He was so full of love. This was the moment when He would begin to *show* the fullness of his love.

Jesus was aware that the Father is always with him.

The Father and I are one (Jn 10:30).

The Father is in me and I am in the Father (Jn 10:38).

I am doing my Father's works (Jn 10:25).

I do not speak of my own accord; it is the Father living in me who is doing his works.

So while he is saying, "I longed to eat this Pasch with you," Jesus is pouring out the whole Trinitarian love on his disciples. I am in the Father and the Father is in me. We are loving you, showing you the depths of Our love, concurring in this work of love, instituting the Holy Eucharist, effecting the total self-emptying of the sacrifice on the Cross. Jesus is there at the table with the most tender feelings of love and intimacy.

And what are the disciples doing? Luke tells us (22:24) that an argument broke out about which of them should be regarded as the greatest. They were not sensitive to Jesus' loving mood, not paying attention to Him. They were preoccupied with themselves, impressed with their status as disciples of Jesus, who just a few days before had entered into Jerusalem to shouts of "Hosanna" by an admiring crowd. They probably were pleased by the signs of deference the pilgrims gave them. Jesus himself

had said that they will be seated on twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel. So they argued on, each wanting to be in the highest place. Perhaps Simon and Jude grumbled about James and John, and how they talked their mother into asking for the best places in the Kingdom. They went on bickering, all this time ignoring Jesus who wanted to show them the depth of His love.

“I am for peace, but they are for fighting” (Ps 120), thought Jesus, but he did not speak. He listened patiently. He did not rebuke them for their pride. Burning with tender, compassionate love, He suddenly went into action. He would give them an example of humility and loving service. (In the Gospels this is the only use by Jesus of the word for “example”: “I have given you an example so that you may do what I have done to you.”)

Jesus acted very deliberately. He got up from the table, took off his cloak, girded himself with a towel, poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet. He knelt before each one, and not just he but “the Father in me doing his works.” The Triune God is humbled before each disciple, pouring out Infinite Love on creatures. The Father and the Son are kneeling before each disciple, cleansing them of their pride and selfishness with the waters of the Holy Spirit.

“Love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Pt 4:8).

If any one loves me he will keep my Word (Jn 14:23).

Love one another as I have loved you (Jn 15:12).

Wash one another’s feet. Wash away each other’s faults and failings with the waters of humble, understanding, compassionate love.

Love covers a multitude of sins.

With Jesus, we can say: “I come from God and am returning to God.” Time is short. I need to love everyone, and love them to the end. We know that we are temples of the Trinity and that the Trinity dwells within each of us. We bring the love of the Blessed Trinity to each other in our humble daily service to one another. And we encounter the Triune God in one another.

Jesus has given each of us to drink from the stream of his delight (Ps 36), of his infinite love, mercy, forgiveness. He says, “The water that I shall give will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

We hold this treasure in earthen vessels (2 Cor 4:7).

The love of God has been poured into our hearts (Rom 5:5).

What do we do with this water welling up within us? We wash each other's feet. Our patient, tender compassion for the failings of others allows the Trinity, dwelling within our souls, to freely pour out Their love on them.

Love covers a multitude of sins.

As Peter writes in his First Letter (4:7-11):

The end of all things is near, so keep your minds calm and sober for prayer. Above all preserve an intense love for each other, since love covers a multitude of sins. Welcome each other into your houses without grumbling. Each of you has received a special grace, so like good stewards responsible for all these varied graces of God, put it at the service of others. If anyone is a speaker, let it be as the words of God, if anyone serves, let it be as in the strength granted by God; so that in everything God may receive the glory, through Jesus Christ, since to him alone belong all glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

IS PERFECTION POSSIBLE?

Sr. David Marie, O.P.
Elmira, NY

"You must therefore be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Mt. 5:48)

"Be holy, for I, Yahweh your God, am holy." (Lv. 19:2)

We just finished reading St. John's gospel stating that Jesus showed how perfect his love was. "He had always loved those who were his in the world, but now he showed how perfect his love was." (Jn. 13:2) What does this mean? Of course, we know that Jesus was/is perfect. After all, he is God. Yes, he was man, too, but he had an edge as God *and* man. "Be holy as God is holy." These words have often haunted me. I have resisted and rejected them as impossible. Minimized them by saying human beings are of their very nature finite, limited, sinners. How can we be perfect? Then I remember St. Paul's words which always amaze me. "For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God." (2 Cor. 5:21)

Whenever we enter into the events of the last days in Jesus' life, we confront most vividly this mystery of God's perfection and holiness. Jesus gives us an example of what holiness demands to the point of death. Even Jesus' act of washing his apostles' feet that we ritually perform now contains all the wonder and depth of God's love as it is in itself and as it is manifested toward us. Is it possible that we can live this same holiness, this same goodness and love to perfection as Jesus does?

While in the library recently I came across an article by Adrienne von Speyr titled, "Holiness in the Everyday."¹ This is a favorite theme of mine, to be holy in our everyday life – nothing spectacular, just a responding to the ordinariness of life with no worries about having to be perfect. I started to read and realized to my surprise that she is speaking of the same issue I just brought up: the demand of Jesus that we be perfect as his heavenly Father. How do we do it? Quite simply by a leap of faith. This might seem too easy but I don't think so. However, I have jumped ahead some so let me explain as best I can.

I am sure you have had the experience of a tune going through your mind all day or have replayed in your mind some disturbing incident. It is as if our psyche has a life of its own as we go about our daily work. What if we were to stop and realize that this inner space or world is easily shaped by random happenings, for instance, a song we heard or an event that occurred? Would we wonder if we have the capacity to let this

inner space be affected by something more substantial, by an abiding inner choice, by a source that is with us throughout the day enabling us to live a holy life? We should, because this inner space is designed first of all for the Word of God. The space, the inner world that we now keep for ourselves and allow to be filled by peripheral enjoyments or distractions is meant to be the place where God's word lives, just as "God's seed lived in Mary: growing and pervading everything."² We are called to be a bearer of that word, to let it live in us and be everything in us.

And what would be an example of this word we must bear? "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." There is no minimizing this call. There is no picking and choosing of which word we want to bear. We can not believe the easy sayings and gradually build up to the more difficult ones. As St. John says, we can't call God a liar. If he demands it, it is possible. No...

Faith means risking, (taking) the whole at once, immediately receiving and affirming the most unbelievable, most impossible-to-translate words. (If you do this) you find yourself, all escape cut off, face-to-face with the Absolute, and, all escape cut off, (obliged) to surrender to this Absolute, this 'impossibility,' the room it demands.... It is the inmost place in me, the center from which all the other points and spaces of my soul can be occupied and ordered. ... In a word: (we are asked) to make room in ourselves for God in place of our self.³

Who can make this demand of us but Jesus? His whole life was doing the Father's will.

When he became man (he) took our everyday upon himself in order to fill it with the Father's eternal day. Coming down from above (he) reached out of eternity and laid hold of temporality, in order to make it the vessel of eternal life, undiminished, undimmed, and uncompromising. This abasement preserves his whole divine dignity: he doesn't compromise himself by it; even as man he is holy as God the Father is holy. His way of living of perfection keeps it open to us, too. Accomplishing the incredible, he invites us to perform it, although in the inverse direction. He invites us, that is, to cast ourselves up from below into this holiness, which, after all, is governed by the Father's holiness, in order to embody it in accord with our personal character and mission.

This leap...is first and foremost an act of faith.⁴

We know we cannot be holy as God is holy. Yet we can believe that what Jesus asks of us is possible. There is no rational answer to all of this because it is an act of

God in us if we will really let God do it. It is an act in which we must unconditionally stop relying on the criteria of what we can grasp and measure. As von Speyr says,

No believer will ever be able to see, understand, or assert his own holiness. On the other hand, his faith equally forbids him to assert that God can't really do in him what he says. The believer leaves the clear vision, the comprehension, to God.⁵

I have to say that this brought about in me a whole different way of thinking about holiness and perfection. We all believe that the Blessed Trinity dwells in us through baptism. He is holy, he lives in me, so I am holy. Favorite quotes from St. Paul have taken on a deeper meaning. "I live now, not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me." (Gal. 2:20) Paul doesn't have two lives, his own and Christ's – but one, Christ's. Christ is holy; Christ is my life, so I am holy; but, I cannot see it. It is God's holiness. "I am no longer trying for perfection by my own efforts...but I want only the perfection that comes through faith in Christ, and is from God and based on faith." (Phil. 3:9) I, the believer, must leave to God the clear vision, the comprehension of this great mystery within me. "Now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed—and he is your life—you too will be revealed in all your glory with him." (Col. 3:4)

Jesus gives us another of his words for us to bear and let live in us. When he had washed their feet and put on his clothes again he went back to the table. 'Do you understand' he said 'what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.'" (Jn 13: 12-15) In our everyday life we are given many opportunities to do this if we are open to letting go of our own life and desires and letting God live in us. For it is in living our ordinary life that we are being made perfect in God's love and holiness.

St. Paul expressed it to his spiritual children in one of his most beautiful passages which I am taking from *The Living Bible*:

When I think of the wisdom and scope of his plan
I fall down on my knees and pray to the Father of all the great family of God—
some of them already in heaven and some down here on earth—
that out of his glorious, unlimited resources
he will give you the mighty inner strengthening of his Holy Spirit.

And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts,
living within you as you trust in him.

May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love;
and may you be able to feel and understand, as all God's children should,
how long, how wide, how deep, and how high his love really is;
and to experience this love for yourselves,
though it is so great that you will never see the end of it
or fully know or understand it.
And so at last you will be filled up with God himself.

Now glory be to God who by his mighty power at work within us
is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of—
infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes.
May he be given glory forever and ever through endless ages
because of his master plan of salvation for the Church through Jesus Christ.⁶
(Eph. 3:14-20)

NOTES

1. Communio: International Catholic Review, Vol. XXIX, No. 4, (Winter 2002).
2. *Ibid.*, p. 753.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 753-754.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 754.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 754-755.
6. (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1971).

A PSALM OF INTRODUCTION TO THE PSALMS

Sr. Jude Marie Thaddeus, O.P.
Elmira

A Hymn of Wonder

For the leader. A maskil.
Of a servant of the Lord who desires her God

What draws me to you, O God?
Is it the story of the babe in the manger
with kings and shepherds at His feet?
Joseph and Mary in wonder at what
God placed in their keep?

What draws me to you, O God?
Is it Jesus meek and humble of heart
with His gentle love for me?
He snared me with His splintered cross,
His life for mine for all eternity.

What draws me to you, O God?
Is it your promise of eternal glory
if I obey the rules?
Especially the one so hard to live,
the one that is made for fools.
It's love to my enemy that's so hard to give,
but that is what you ask;
To overcome my inmost self
To join you in repast.

What draws me to you, O God?
Why do I run away from you?
Why do I cling, hanging on?
Is it life I fear or the pain of death?
Or, perhaps a fear I don't know yet?

What draws me to you, O God?
It must be all that I have said.
Yet it's a mystery still unanswered
and swirls within my head.
There's much more I still question
that's better left unsaid.

What draws me to you, O God?
For all my thoughts about You,
I still can't comprehend.
Except to say and know in my heart,
I will embrace you until the end.

Is it faith, Is it hope, Is it love?
Is it trust, though vague, and I falter?
But I do know that You will not leave me.
You will lead me to Him at the altar.

I am empty, exhausted and ready to nod
And I ponder again the question;
What draws me to you, O God?

FIVE PSALMS

Sr. Mary Regina, O.P.
West Springfield, MA

One day while in our French library I discovered a very beautiful book of psalms with a little commentary for each one. It was translated from the original into French by Rev. Rene Compaing. I translated it into English and thought it would be of interest to include a few of the psalms in *Dominican Monastic Search*.

Psalm (83) 84 Quam dilecta tabernacula

Hymn on Sion

How very consoling is this psalm for the Levites when a schismatic or fomenter of schism makes it a necessity to choose either participation in a condemned cult or the loss of temporal goods! How consoling and ravishing also for souls who sacrifice the joys of having a family, their independence and their money to better praise God by pronouncing religious vows, choosing forever His temple as a dwelling, like the sparrows and swallows who faithfully maintain their nest. The psalmist seems to propose these birds as models to the Levites tempted to abandon the temple of the true God and to souls who would hesitate to answer His call to consecrate themselves to Him. "With the house that you own, you are poor, if you possess the House of God, you are rich" (St. Augustine).

To the Master of the chant on the Gittith, Psalm of the Sons of Core

How lovely and to be loved, Lord God of armies,
Are Your glorious tabernacles!
The souls of your saints, sigh, all enflamed
For Your Temple, O King of the Heavens!
My heart, my flesh, languishes for you, consumed,
Living God of pious desires!

The sparrow has made for herself a nice home in these dwellings,
The swallow a nest under the garret.
Your temple, your altars, Lord God of armies!
Happy a thousand and a thousand times
The souls who enclosed there keep up forever
The praise of the King of Kings!

Happy the one in this bitter valley, who by grace
Elevates his heart to you;
Living waters refresh his sorrowful way,

As the rain moistens the flower.
From virtue to virtue, the soul takes flight towards you;
To see you in Sion, Lord.

Yahweh, Lord of Hosts, be our safeguard,
Listen to the cries of our hearts;
O You, the shield of your people, look
On the face of your Christ the Saviour!

Far better to pass one single hour in your courts
Than a thousand days with the great;
To live one's life at the threshold of your dwelling,
Than in the palaces of the wicked.
Sun of truth, God Himself is my light,
My buckler and my support;
When the just man prays, He gives to his prayer
Grace, glory and every good.

For those who walk before him in innocence,
He spares no benefits;
Happy the one who gives him all his confidence,
He will draw from him strength and peace.

Psalm (22) 23 Dominus regit me

Individual Confidence

I am the Good Shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for his sheep...I know my sheep and they know me (St. John X, 11-14).

Psalm of David

The Lord leads me, I partake of every good;
He makes me rest in a green pasture
By fresh unsalted waters.

He restores my soul that it might live;
In straight paths He wills that I follow Him,
For the honor of his sacred name.

In the shadows of death where the wild beasts hide themselves,
I fear no evil, your presence saves me
And your crook defends me.

Before my enemies a table is laid out for me,
You pour over my head a delectable oil,
And my cup is overflowing.

Supported, consoled until my last hour,
I will dwell, my God in your holy dwelling,
For length of days, while praising you.

Psalm (24) 25 Domini est terra

Liturgical Psalm

The Lord has triumphed in combat; touch the wounds and you will see that they are healed, immortality is given to the infirmity of human nature (St. Augustine). Jesus Christ enters by His grace into souls who were closed to Him through sin (Le Hir).

Psalm of David

Choir: The world and the goods that it shelters,
The earth and man who inhabits it,
All is for God, both small and great.
On the seas, his arms have founded it
It has been consolidated by him
Above the waves and torrents,

One: Who will ascend the hill,
Voice: Lord, my God,
Who will live under the divine wings
In the holy place?

Second: He whose hand is without stain
Voice: And the pure of heart,
The heart free of vain attachments,
Loyal and sure.

Choir: God blesses him and justifies him
And reveals himself his Saviour;
His race does not seek after life
Except in the Face of the Lord

Choir: Rise up, ancient doors,
Lift up your lintels, ancient portals,
The King of Glory comes towards you.

Interior What King of Glory comes to us?
Voice:
Choir: Yahweh, our King advances,
 He is very strong, he is very great;
 This is the all powerful King,
 Always triumphant in battle.
 Rise up, ancient doors,
 Lift up, ancient portals,
 The King of glory comes towards you.

Interior What King of Glory comes to us?
Voice:
Choir: The King of Glory and power,
 Yahweh, Sabbaoth advances.

Psalm (80) 81 Exsultate Deo adjutori nostro

Oracle imparted to the Community

If you knew the Gift of God and Who it is Who says to you: Give me a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water (Jn.4).

For the honor of God our strength
Let cries of joy resound on this great day!
Let the sons of Jacob intone for their Lord
Melodious songs of love!
Let lutes, tambourines, harps and voices prepare
To celebrate, each in turn!

Sound trumpets and horns, when the moon is new
And when it shines in its fullness;
For the solemnity the Lord has revealed to us
His sovereign commandment.

When Joseph fled from abhorrent Egypt,
God himself established this law;
A voice that I had ignored until then said,
Israel, I speak for you.

At my voice, the burden fell,
From your weak arms and humiliated head.
I have heard your desires in the fiery cloud,
At Meriba I tested you.

My people, listen to me; it is God Who implores you,
Can you hear me, Israel?
For your strange gods do not swear falsely against me,
Nor adore any except the God of heaven!

I alone am your God, know how to recognize me,
From Egypt I have delivered you.
Open wide your mouth, and I, Your Divine Master
Will fill it with every good.

But ungrateful Israel disdain my advances,
Disobeyed his Lord.
And so I left him to follow his preferences
And the caprices of his heart.

Ah, if he would listen to me and show himself docile,
And come back to the right path:
Over all his enemies it would be easy for me
To let my hand fall heavily again.

Those who are against you would seek to please you;
Saved forever, flourishing once more,
With the flour of the wheat and honey from the rock
By your God you would be fed.

Psalm (96) 97 Dominus regnavit, exultet terra

Enthronement Psalm

God reigns. Let the kingdoms rage as much as they want. What can they do against the King of all the Kingdoms, the Lord of all kings, the Creator of all the ages? They scorn him because He has appeared so obedient and humble. This is through mercy and not through powerlessness. He appears humble only to put himself within our reach (St. Augustine).

God reigns; earth and oceans tremble with happiness,
Let the western dwellers exult at seeing their Lord!

The clouds and the night surround him like a mantle;
His justice and His equity,
From His sublime throne burning fires radiate
To consume iniquity.

Flashes of his lightning light up the world,
The earth trembles before Him;

Like wax in the fire, not a rock that does not melt,
When the divine looks at it.

The heavens exult proclaiming His justice,
The peoples see him glorious;
Shame on those who adore idols, let him blush,
The sectarian of these false gods.

Tremble angels and gods, adore His wisdom,
Sion, sing joyful songs;
The daughters of Juda tremble with joy,
Because of your judgments.

Master of the universe, you elevate yourself in grandeur,
Infinitely above all gods.
Love justice, then, hate evil,
Servers of the Master of the heavens.

Jehovah guards those who seek to please him
And delivers them from the sinner.
For the race of the just he sows light,
And for upright hearts, happiness;
Oh, you just, taste the joy of the Lord who enlightens you,
Give glory to the Name of the Lord!

VALUE AND IMPLICATIONS OF PAPIAS

Sr. Mary of Christ, O.P.
Los Angeles, CA

Papias, a bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia (A.D.70-155?), has been a subject of controversy in his time and is largely dismissed in our own. He is credited with a compilation of five books in which were included all the sayings of Our Lord which he had been able to garner.¹

Only a few fragments of his writings remain. Irenaeus thought him learned and well versed in Sacred Scripture but Eusebius considered him a man of slender capacity. Fr. Pierre Benoit finds Papias unreliable and distasteful.²

Papias was said to be familiar with John the Beloved and Ignatius of Antioch. He himself said he said that he learned of the words and deeds of Jesus from the hearers of the disciples and Aristion and the Presbyter John.³

From ancient documents, including those of Papias, it can be learned that the First and Second Century Church did not believe that John the Beloved wrote the canonical *Book of Revelation*. It was thought that the Presbyter John or Aristion wrote it.⁴

Papias' most genuine texts may be divided into three types: apocryphal, apocalyptic, and literal. These are of unequal value and are only reports rather than excerpts from his writings. The apocryphal writings could best be described as preacher's examples and, in general, they are of little worth. It may, in fact, be largely symbolic language. Papias is said to have described the *Hexameron* as an allegory referring to Christ and the Church.⁵

Some strange and exaggerated millenarianism was attributed to Our Lord's teaching. This attribution is, of course, impossible and probably not intended to be taken literally. There is a relationship between the apocalyptic writings of Papias' and other contemporary apocalyptic writers. Beyond this, it is not clear that they are valuable.

Papias' real contribution is the light which is shed on the history of the formation of Scripture. Oral tradition, not written tradition, was the standard of authenticity in the Church at the turn of the first century.

The enumeration of Papias' fragments differs in various editions. The one used here is that of the new translation of the Ante-Nicene Fathers.⁶ This translation contains a general index where Papias' sayings are divided into three classes: genuine, less reliable and spurious. Here we will discuss only the certainly genuine texts.⁷

—Fragment I describes Papias' method and intentions and should be taken literally.

—Fragment IV is about the super-fruitfulness of the earth during the millennium and is apocalyptic in style.

—Fragment V is symbolic, redolent of Dante, and should be placed among the apocryphal writings.

Fragment VI begins with apocryphal stories. Other such narratives, parables, sayings of the Savior are said to belong to the writings of Papias as well. The latter part of this fragment is literal and concerns the formation of the Gospel of St. Mark. The person who reported the writing of Papias combined this information, not he himself.

It is alleged that Papias knew both Polycarp and John the Apostle. Whether he knew Polycarp is not clear from the documents available. It does not seem that he knew the Apostle John since Papias asked minutely after their (the apostles) sayings—what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Phillip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the Lord's disciples.⁸

Would Papias have inquired about the Apostle John if he had heard him personally? Since Papias did not know John the Beloved, and Papias speaks of him as living sometime in the past, John's death would probably be 85 AD at the latest. There are, in fact, two traditions about the death of John: one that he died about the time of his brother James and another that he lived to a great age.

Eusebius says that in Ephesus there are two tombs which are said to be John's. One that of the Apostle and one presumably of the Presbyter John. It is also his opinion that the latter was probably the one who had seen the apocalyptic vision.

Philip of Side recounts some believed John the Presbyter wrote the Second and Third Catholic Epistles. Men of the primitive age accepted the First Epistle only. I would suggest that Aristion would have the better claim to the authorship.⁹

The first section of Fragment VI speaks of the miracles that were related by the daughters of Phillip. One about the raising of a dead man to life, another about swallowing deadly poison and "other fabulous stories of this sort."

The stories told by the daughters of Phillip are not impossible. Parallels may be found in historical documents in differing centuries. Some of these are actually found in Apocryphal works. What marks these stories as apocryphal is that there are so many of them in one place that the whole loses credibility. It sounds as if these are a series of preacher's stories meant to edify the faithful.

This is paralleled in the writings of St. Alphonsus Ligouri, that attributed to Blessed Cecilia, etc. Similar stories creep into the sayings of the desert fathers, into the legends of St. Lawrence, St. George, St Benedict, of some Dominican Blesseds, and

so forth. These are similar to other stories found in edifying spiritual discourse. Papias finds himself in this mixed company.

Among the apocalyptic stories is that about the immense fertility of the earth during the millennium:

...vines shall grow, having each ten thousand shoots, and on every one of the clusters ten thousand grapes, and every grape when pressed will give five-and twenty metretes (sic) of wine, etc.¹⁰

The main difficulty with this text is that it is not dependent on a Christian source at all. It is found in 2 Baruch 29:5-6. This book is a Jewish apocryphal book written in the late first century. There is a certain Christian slant in Papias' version, but otherwise the fragment is parallel to the Jewish text. Would Papias be the source for 2 Baruch? Almost certainly not. Would Papias have used the "prophecy" from 2 Baruch? This is most likely. Thus, this reference would seem to be symbolic, rather than literal.

This brings us to another textual problem. Papias seems to believe in a physical millennium where Christ reigns personally on earth, and this before the consummation of time. There is a parallel to this: it is found in the book of Revelation which is enshrined in the canon of the Christian Scriptures. Did not Papias learn from the Presbyter John to whom this book is attributed? This would also be a symbolic millennium, rather than a literal one.

Familiarity makes it easy to forget the remarkable and vivid language of the Book of Revelation. In Revelation 15 the whole vintage of the earth was put into the winepress of God's anger. Blood flowed out of the winepress "up to the horses' bridle as far away as sixteen hundred furlongs" (vs. 20).¹¹ Papias' description of the millennium pales with that written by the Presbyter John. Thus, apocalyptic texts do not seem to diminish the reputation of Papias: at best they would be as useful as the images used in the Book of Revelation. Papias' description is probably not as theologically coherent as the Presbyter John's.

Literal texts in Papias are the most useful. Mark is described as the interpreter of Peter in Rome. Whether he interpreted into Greek or Latin is unclear. The recorded language favors Greek which was that commonly spoken in the civilized world.

It is from Papias that we received this ancient teaching on the Gospel of Mark. Mark had learned of the life and death of Jesus from the preaching of Peter which was not systematic but occasional, thus he handed down the preaching of Peter as accurately as he could although he got things somewhat out of order. This is what we actually see in the Gospel of Mark.

There is no one journey to Jerusalem." The acts and words of Jesus are loosely clumped around certain geographical areas. The first area is that around Galilee. His stay there centers around Capernaum. The next place Jesus goes is to the territory of

Tyre (Mark 7:4), to Bethsaida, then to Caesara Philippi. In Mark 10:1 he goes into Judea. Only in Mark 10:32 does he goes up to Jerusalem.

Loosely clumped geographical areas cannot be forced into the mold of one trip to Jerusalem. Likewise, the Messianic Secret would be the emphases of Peter, not those of Mark.

The hearers of the disciples were able to evaluate the character of Mark's sources and discuss their accuracy. That is, there is a clear oral tradition concerning the life and death of Jesus. The written link between Matthew and Mark is no longer necessary. Oral tradition better accounts for the consonances and dissonances between these two texts.

Luke is another matter:

Seeing that many others have undertaken to draw up accounts of the events that have taken place among us, exactly as these were handed down to us by those who were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, I in my turn, after having going over the whole story from the beginning have decided to write an ordered account.... (Luke 1:1-4) Even here oral tradition is the measure of the accuracy of the written words. No exact dependency of Luke upon Mark is necessary.

It is clear that Scripture scholars disagree. Many lines have been drawn between texts to show the dependency of one text upon the other. Perhaps Papias would be a witness that these diagrams are not necessary. All depends ultimately on the oral tradition of the Church.

One of my professors said that he did not know the reason, but when there are two adequate explanations of anything, it is the simpler that we choose. Perhaps this is an appropriate time to choose the simpler explanation.

NOTES

1. *Ancient Christian Writers*, No. 6 (The Newman Press: Maryland, 1948) pp.103-124.
2. Pierre Benoit, *Jesus and the Gospel*, Vol. 1 (The Seabury Press, NY, 1973) p.193.
3. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1 (Hendreckson, Mass., 1999) Fragment 1, p.153.
4. *ACR*, p.122.
5. *Ibid.*, p.120.
6. *ANF*, Vol. 10, p. 355.
7. *ANF*, Vol. 1, p.153.
8. *Ibid.*, p.153.
9. *ACR*, p. 122.
10. *ANF*, p. 153.
11. Scripture quoted from *The New Jerusalem Bible*, 1967.

DISCOVERING AQUINAS¹ BY AIDAN NICHOLS, O.P.: A Book Review-Essay

Sr. Thomas Mary Mc Bride, O.P.
North Guilford, CT

I like to tell my friends that "St. Thomas has finally caught up with me." Indeed, I am very happy that he has. During my early years, St. Thomas Aquinas was an unattainable star on a distant horizon. I knew him as the epitome of Catholic theology but any attempt to enter into his thought left me cold and unenlightened. To my surprise, I was given his name in religious life and so, providentially, he became my patron saint. It was the Theological Formation Program for Dominican Nuns that enabled me to "get my feet wet" and now I am happily "swimming" in the clear waters of his burning wisdom. So it is with joy that I received this new book with a title that captured my experience: *Discovering Aquinas* by Dominican theologian, Aidan Nichols.

Mindful of the "universal call to holiness" proclaimed by John Paul II, what energizes me in the study of theology is the undergirding and deepening of the spiritual/mystical life of union with God. St. Thomas, a consummate spiritual master, was able in his lifetime to maintain the intimate connection between theology and spirituality, faith and reason, by an adherence to Truth which transcends and unites them in the Being of God. His metaphysics enables one to think through and probe the doctrines and mysteries of faith. Through the application of metaphysical principles one is strengthened in the truth that one already believes. This is a source of vitality and transformation in Christ.

The chapters of Fr. Nichols' book can be seen as keys inviting one to enter the many gardens of Thomistic thought. In Chapter 1, "Thomas in his Time," after a brief summary of his life and a presentation of his *Sacra Doctrina* as an orderly reflection on the Bible in the light of faith, there follows an overview of his most famous work, the *Summa Theologiae*: the *exitus* of creatures going forth from God by his Word, and the *reditus*—their returning back to God in the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 2 on "Revelation" may come as a refreshing surprise to many. Thomas takes us beyond the current exegetical climate of historical-biblical criticism and ushers the reader straight to the heart of the matter: God, as First Truth, speaking to us. For St. Thomas, Revelation is a gift coming down from the *Father of lights*, so that by faith, we might pass through the words to the divine reality from which they spring. In Scripture, "God utters himself as he really is" and the light of faith "is a share in God's own knowledge of himself" (38). By putting faith in first place, the soul adheres to the revealed mystery given us by God with Jesus taking his rightful place as Master and Lord. The chapter concludes with a magnificent invitation to take the gift of God's Word "as the very measure of our own minds" and to do so "with absolute certitude" (35). Such faith, actualized in the soul by the Holy Spirit's gift of knowledge, can only be a loving faith by which we possess our whole life. The theological virtue of faith is a fragrant garden in which the sincere seeker will want to linger long.

Chapter 3, "God and Creation," focuses on St. Thomas' three-fold teaching of how the creature can know the Creator: first, through the *descending* gift of Revelation *coming down from above from the Father of lights (Jas 1:17)*; secondly, in the *ascending* gift of reason and the analogy of being; thirdly, through the gift of mystical experience, touched on but developed further in Chapter 11. In his creation theology, we can know as creatures that God exists, albeit in a *real distinction* from the world—God is completely distinguished from the world and outside any world-view as *totally Other*; and we can know how God exists—by means of his attributes, a study which is, in fact, an explanation of the ways in which God does *not* exist, a saying of what God is *not*; and finally, we can represent how God acts—by means of his knowledge, will and power by which all things come to be. St. Thomas sees creation as the analogical comprehension of created being participating in the Divine Being of God himself. *In him we live and move and have our being* (Acts 17: 28). Creaturely beings are not their own being but are beings by participation in the very being of God.² Indeed the creature exists "only in its relation to God" (58). The reader is introduced to the divine simplicity, goodness, immutability, and perfection of God, as well as the metaphysical topics of causality, act and potency, and participation. Attention is given to the chief contribution of Aquinas in the advancement of philosophy: *esse*—the first perfection and the ultimate *act* of all reality, the act in which we as creatures participate. **The ardent seeker will gradually want to explore all these paths in this intricate but rewarding garden of Thomistic thought.**

Chapter 4, "The Trinity," begins with a summary account of the historical development of Trinitarian theology. I found this chapter particularly dense until I came to its final section, "*The Trinity in relation to ourselves.*" Here the reader is drawn into the Trinitarian "life of grace and glory" (72) which is ours as adopted sons and daughters of the Father and the ultimate purpose of our creaturely existence. *Father, the glory which you have given to me I have given to them* (Jn 17: 22). A tip for the reader: whenever a chapter seems particularly dense it might be helpful to turn to the last few illuminating pages.

Chapter 5, "The Trinity in Man," discusses the Trinitarian processions and their missions—the indwelling of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the human spirit. How human beings share in this Trinitarian Life was for St. Thomas an important question. The answer he gives is grace (in Chapter 7) by which we are conjoined to the divine being itself.

The following is a personal reflection on how the Trinitarian 'conjoining,' in a synthesis of faith and reason, might be both spiritually and theologically understood—an invitation to the reader for further in-depth study and penetration in prayer of this sublime mystery. St. Thomas, following St. Augustine on whom he builds his Trinitarian theology, speaks of the *verbum cordis* (word of the heart) as an adequate analogical concept to represent divine life. The procession of the Son (*verbum*) from the Father, which may be compared to the procession of a mental word in our interior action of knowing according to Thomistic epistemology, might also be compared to a word of wisdom spoken in the soul by a gratuitous gift of the Holy Spirit. "*Dwell in my love*" (Jn 15: 9). When one hears the word of God spoken in one's being and understands that word in one's mind, it could be called the term and perfection of the faith-filled soul. Like the procession of the Eternal Word revealing the perfection of the Father, the soul in its act of understanding of the

word spoken within, produces in the intellect a conception of what it is called to be. This is the procession of the interior word. In that word spoken within the soul, the Father, so to speak, offers His gift of salvation. The intellect, in its reception of that word through the Spirit's gift of understanding, is made one with the word which has been impressed in its being. And as the Father's act of understanding is the generation (conception) of the Son in his own likeness, so the intellect's reception of the Spirit's gift of understanding in its "womb" of faith is a conception of the word in the likeness of the Son.

St. Augustine says something similar regarding the soul who has received this perfect knowledge and conceives a mental word in the likeness of the Son of God.

With the eye of the mind, therefore, we perceive in that eternal truth, from which all temporal things have been made, the form according to which we are, and by which we effect something either in ourselves or in bodies with a true and right reason. The true knowledge of things, thence conceived, we bear with us as a word, and beget by inner speech; nor does it depart from us by being born.³

So it was with the Virgin Mary who, as St. Augustine teaches, conceived Christ first in her mind before she conceived him in her womb.

When the angel had said this, she full of faith and conceiving Christ first in her mind and then in her body, 'Behold,' she said, 'the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word'. . . Mary believed and what she believed was done in her (*Serm. CCXV*).

Are we not, as Dominicans, called to the same? The soul will not conceive the word in its life unless it has first, through faith and prayer, conceived the word in the conception of its intellect. When through grace, the soul identifies itself with that word and seeks to express that word in the thoughts, words, and deeds of his or her life, the soul gives birth to Christ again and again: "*My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act upon it*" (Lk 8:21).

Adrienne von Speyr has a similar message:

The Word can stick in our memory and at any moment take on life through our will. It can become the measure of our activity, the mantle of our existence, and it can put forth such vital energy that it is, in a certain sense, more alive than our life. It can constantly receive and shelter us within itself. It can do so even insofar as it is a demand; but it does so above all insofar as it is love.⁴

Chapter 6, "Angelology," introduces the reader to the tract on the angels which won the title by which St. Thomas is most familiarly known—the *Angelic Doctor*. Thomas was keenly interested in the reality of angels, those pure spirits, indestructible mental

realities of knowing and willing, independent of all but God. Angels do not share our human limitations and can be our best friends in our efforts to live the supernatural life of grace. They have been assigned to help us on the way to salvation if we but ask for their powerful assistance.

Chapter 7 treats of "Grace and the Virtues." I recommend beginning this chapter with the section entitled: "*The ontology of grace.*" Here is revealed the special "dilection" of the Holy Spirit, "made interior to the soul's essence." God gives his creature the Holy Spirit, "a new inward principle or power"—a "pneumatic existence" which "has its energizing centre within." This is God's most glorious gift, a sharing in his own divine nature, the "grace of glory [which] will bring us finally before God" (105-106).⁵

Chapter 7 includes a section, "*Grace and freedom,*" which is a profound study in itself. God brings about his will in the creatures's regard through grace, while at the same time leaving our personal freedom intact. Fr. Nichols uses the example of a person emerging from sinfulness who does so "by a decision which is really his own yet at the same time is made possible by the ground-preparing grace of God" (106). "*For it is God who works in you, both to will and to accomplish*" (Phil 2: 13).

Grace places the intelligent creature in that condition where the achievement of its being is possible. And it likewise places her in a condition of liberty where the choice of this possibility can be made (96).

Fortified with the reality of grace , "the divine *energeia*," the mind and will is then prepared to live the life of virtue which begins with the moral order both in ourselves and in society (105). The life of virtue is St. Thomas' way to reclaim a Christian cultural environment wherein supernatural values are, once again, household realities. "*For we are his handiwork created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance that we should walk in them*" (Eph 2: 10). The supernatural world of grace is a luminous and spacious Thomistic garden for study and contemplation.

Fr. Nichols points out in Chapter 8, "Christ, Church, Sacraments," that although Thomas does not provide a sustained study of the Church, "all the elements necessary for ecclesiology can be found in his work" (120). It seems that here would be an opportune place to compare and synthesize those "ecclesial elements" found in St. Thomas with the highly developed understanding of the Church found in the writings of Hans Urs von Balthasar. Such a study could facilitate *seeing* the depth of meaning present in Thomistic thought. Nichols gives a hint of this depth where he explains, for example, that Thomas' "key term for the Church is *congregatio fidelium*, 'the congregation of the faithful,' but owing to his high view of faith [has] exalted consequences" (121). On the one hand, von Balthasar spells out some of these "exalted consequences"—for example, the Church as bride of Christ—while on the other, St. Thomas undergirds and *exalts* their reality.⁶

In Chapter 8, Fr. Nichols does a fine job of explaining divinity and humanity united in the one Divine Person that is Christ. Aquinas speaks in a way that can be absorbed by modern ears yet faithful to Chalcedon and the Greek Fathers. To his

interpretation of the *Chalcedonian Formula* there is added his own rich metaphysics of being (113).

In the section, "*The grace of union*," the author unveils the splendors of the Christian call to deification which can be found in St. Thomas and is another example of his *high view of faith*. Here we are told that Christ became incarnate to redeem us for this life of intimate union with himself and that following Thomas' thought,

our humanity can also attain through grace that further perfection that lies far beyond our capacities. All this came about 'for us men and for our salvation.' The life of Christ can be our salvation history because God has filled and super-filled the being of Christ with graces, graces meant not least to overflow from the Church's Head to the Church's members (116).

We are meant to live the life of Christ, that is, to be transformed into *Christ in his mysteries*, which is the next section of this chapter. A quotation from the renowned Thomist, Yves Congar, O.P., speaks of the *abiding impact of the grace* of these mysteries as

mysteries lived out by the Saviour [and] [remaining] in his glorified humanity as a disposition of eternal value, properly equipped to produce in us the saving effects which correspond to each of these mysteries (119).⁷

Meditation on the Mysteries of the Rosary might be suggested here and the parenthetical reference to Mariology made in this chapter (118) might be another opportune place for further development of Thomistic thought.⁸

Chapter 9 gives a thumbnail sketch of "Thomas in History." St. Thomas (1224/25-1274) worked in an age when the *lectio* of the monastery was giving birth to the *quaestio* which evolved into the *disputatio* of the university. The lofty synthesis of faith and reason, contemplation and argumentation, which St. Thomas was capable of holding together, began after his lifetime to split apart opening a rift between philosophy and theology. This chapter recounts the turbulent waters which resulted in a "Second Scholasticism," and then a "Third Scholasticism." There was another "decline" at the Second Vatican Council and now it seems, as Jesuit Thomist Gerald Mc Cool predicted, St. Thomas is rising again and a "Fourth Scholasticism" is in the making.⁹ Notwithstanding the numerous challenges to Thomistic teaching, particularly Scotism and nominalism, Pope John XXII, on July 18, 1323, canonized Thomas with great solemnity; Pius V, in 1567, elevated him to the status of a doctor of the Church, *Doctor Communis*; and in 1880 Pope Leo XIII declared Thomas to be the patron saint of all Catholic schools and universities. In 1974, the seventh centenary of the Angelic Doctor's death, Pope Paul VI proclaimed at a Dominican Congress in Rome that we were witnessing a "formidable return of Thomistic influence." Karol Wojtyla taught Thomism at the University of Lublin for twenty four years before becoming John Paul II with worldwide influence. In 1997, an international survey

of the most important personalities of the second millennium in religious, political and artistic spheres revealed St. Thomas to be in first place.

Part Four concludes the book with a look at some necessary philosophical and theological tools. In Chapter 10, "Thomas and the Practice of Philosophy," the reader is introduced to Thomistic metaphysics as the science of *being as being together with its properties*, of first causes or principles, act and potency, the analogy of being, essence and existence, and the transcendentals. The most exciting of these, yet the most difficult to get a hold of, is St. Thomas' central innovative concept of *esse*: existence as "dynamic, energizing act" (151). *Esse* for St. Thomas is so basic and important that it is not captured in "existence" considered as "a fact" or "out there." *Esse* is best thought of as *actus essendi*, the act of the essence, the root actuality of being, the perfection of all perfections, of all acts. *Esse* is the fundamental dimension of reality at the heart of everything else; it is the root of everything else that is.

The metaphysics of *esse* can be applied to the spiritual life. Man is composed of two essential principles, soul and body, his essence and existence, but he has only one act of existing (*esse*)—his spiritual existence—given as a gift from the Creator God. The act of existence belongs to the soul which the soul communicates to the body, making one complete composite person. Each particular person's act of existence belongs to himself alone, while his specific essence, the *ens commune*, or common being of man, considered in distinction from its act of existence, is the same for all members of the same species. According to Etienne Gilson "a human soul is an act that stands in need of further actualization...'Become what thou art' is for such a form [the human soul] an imperative order, because it is inscribed as a law in its very nature."¹⁰

The author of a Thomistically flavored study of St. Teresa's *Interior Castle*,¹¹ proposes that the *act* for which the human soul was created is "to identify itself with the act by which God desires himself," to become *one Spirit* with him (1 Cor 6:17). This *act*, the author continues, is "a kind of participation in the aspiration of love which is in God, associating the creature not with his Being but with the divine act. Union is in the act; St. Teresa compares it to two candles which mingle their flames without being merged together." Within the Trinity, God gives himself completely to the Son; and the Son returns himself completely to the Father in an endless exchange of love that is the Holy Spirit. We are called to mingle our human love with the *totally Other* divine love that God is. "Dwell in me and I in you" (Jn 15: 4). This objective act of pure love is a spontaneous interior choice of God at all times in the depth of the soul.¹² It is a becoming that is entirely interior, an ordering of the potency of our spiritual being toward a precise goal: our true actualization by grace in a progressive becoming of who we really are in God. Like *esse*, it is the root actuality of our "*to be*" in Christ, the root act of all spiritual life and growth, the perfection of all perfections, the fundamental of union in reality with the Heart of Christ—"love united to love": "You will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you" (Jn 14: 20). "An act of this kind is mystical, being the essential reality of the mystical life." It is mystical because it is supernatural; it can only be accomplished with the help of grace. "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us" (Rom 5: 5).¹³

The concluding Chapter 11, "Thomas and the Idea of Theology," brings the reader full circle. In Chapter 2 on Revelation, we saw that Sacred Scripture was "central to Thomas' picture of Christian theology" (29). In Chapter 11, we are brought back to the same idea—a theology "soaked in Scripture" (169), and a glance at his writings prove this to be true. St. Thomas was first of all a lecturer on the "sacred page." Like all Masters of Sacred Theology, or *Sacra Doctrina*, he was fully conversant with the sacred text and had mastered all the Patristic commentaries.

St. Thomas was open to truth wherever he found it. In his study of theology as a science, he adapted a theory of Aristotle and called it the *subalteration of the sciences*, a method by which one can make use of other sciences as subordinates and handmaids.¹⁴ This is possible because in all fields of knowledge there are sub-fields that can contribute to the main subject of investigation. Frequently, distinct fields of their own become sub-fields to something else. Depending on the objective purpose of the study, the sciences, without losing their own integrity as a science, sometimes get subjected to other sciences. An example of this subjection would be the relation of musical theory to mathematics. Consequently, if one is using the historical-critical method in the exegesis of Sacred Scripture, it is necessary to apply the *subalteration of sciences* principle because theology and exegesis are distinct, logically speaking, in the way that theology is distinct from philosophy, astronomy, biology, music, mathematics, etc. The application of the historical-critical method to Sacred Scripture must always be subservient to faith and the Tradition of the Church, the Tradition that St. Thomas considered a *fount of revealed understanding* not distinct from the Scriptures, since "Scripture itself [is] transmitted by Tradition and the two together are the norm of Christian faith" (30-31). Christians study the Bible in the light of faith and in the Tradition of commentary and doctrine, liturgy and lectionary, approved by the *magisterium* of the Church. Historical-critical exegesis can be an illuminating tool but it must be shaped to theological purposes, that is, to the fundamental vision of the Scriptural world which all Christians share.

The book's conclusion offers high praise for "the apostolic value of St. Thomas' thought and writing" (181), and (this writer would add) for the solid grounding and mystical heights his theology offers. In the opening question of the *Summa theologiae*, St. Thomas taught that "the purpose and meaning of human existence is ultimately to be found only in God who is invincible and incomprehensible" (24). Because St. Thomas focused his whole life on knowing and loving God, he knew that,

it was necessary for the salvation of man that he should have, beyond the philosophical disciplines investigated by human reason, a teaching that proceeds from divine revelation.¹⁵

The *Doctor Communis* dedicated himself to this kind of holy teaching or *sacra doctrina*. He wrote in the *Summa contra Gentiles*, "the ultimate salvation of man is that he may be perfected in his intellectual aspect by the contemplation of the First Truth."¹⁶ But for Thomas, the intellect is more than logic and abstract conceptualizations; his *intellectus* includes an understanding by "kinship, *propter connaturalitatem*, rather than by the application of reasoning, *secundum perfectum usum rationis*," and the intuitive grasp of truth enlightened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The *Summa theologiae* is meant to

engage the whole person in his psychological, physical, spiritual unity, in a *living communion* with God. "Christian theology moves in the world of grace and depends on a loving intercourse with divine things."¹⁷ On January 28th, the Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, the following passage is read in the liturgy.

*I prayed, and understanding was given me;
I called upon God, and the spirit of Wisdom came to me.
I preferred her to scepters and thrones,
and I accounted wealth as nothing in comparison with her.
Neither did I liken to her any priceless gem,
because all gold is but a little sand in her sight,
and silver will be accounted as clay before her.
I loved her more than health and beauty,
and I chose to have her rather than light,
because the light that comes from her never goes out.
All good things came to me along with her,
and in her hands innumerable riches...
She is an unfailing treasure for men;
And those who obtain it win friendship with God.
(Wisdom 7)*

St. Thomas, one of the great mystics of the Church, desired above all to enter *the wine cellar of divine love*. During the last three years of his life he experienced ecstatic union with God more and more often. After the feast of St. Nicholas, December 6th, 1273, he put away his quill and wrote no more. He never completed his famous *Summa theologiae*. From an image of the Crucified, Thomas heard these words, "*Bene scripsist de me, Thoma. Quam ergo mercedem accipies,*" "Thou hast written well of me, Thomas. What wouldst thou claim as a reward." Thomas replied, "*Nil nisi te, Domine,*" "Only Thyself, O Lord."¹⁸

As Fr. Nichols tells us in the beginning of his book (18) and again at its conclusion, the theology of St. Thomas "no matter how speculative its flights, had never had an ultimate goal different from that of Benedict or Bernard in the heavenly city of God." (178).

*O the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!
For in him and through him, all things are.
To him be glory forever! Amen.
(Rom 11: 33)*

NOTES

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3. St. Augustine, *The Trinity*, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 45, trans. Stephen McKenna, CSSR (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1963), Bk. IX, Ch. 7, p. 281.
4. Adrienne von Speyr, "Holiness in the Everyday," *Communio*, 29, 4, 2002, p. 758.
5. See St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Ia. IIae., q. 110, a. 1.
6. See especially Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Explorations in Theology II: Spouse of the Word, Who is the Church?*, trans. A. V. Littledale with Alexander Dru (San Francisco CA: Ignatius Press, 1991), p. 161, and St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, IIIa. Q. 30, a. 1.
7. Yves Congar, O.P., "Le sens de l'Economie salutaire dans la 'theologie' de saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Festgabe J Lortz. II. Glaube und Geschichte* (Baden-Baden, 1958), pp. 73-122.
8. See St. Thomas Aquinas: *Summa theologiae*, vol. 51, ed. and trans. with appendices by T. R. Heath, O.P. (NY: Mc Graw Hill, 1969); *The Three Greatest Prayers: Commentaries on the Our Father, the Angelic Salutation, Namely the Hail Mary, and the Apostles' Creed*, trans. Laurence Shapcote, O.P. with intro. by Thomas Gilby, OP (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1956); *Commentary on Gospel of St. John*, trans. James Weisheipl, O.P. and Fabian Larcher, OP, Part I: Chapters 1-7 (Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1980) and Part II: Chapters 8-21 (Petersham, MA: St. Bede's Publications).
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10. Etienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1952), pp. 171, 181.
11. Sr. Madeline of St. Joseph, OCD, *Within the Castle with St. Teresa of Avila*, trans. and abridged, Carmel of Pittsford, N.Y., with intro by Kieran Kavanaugh, OCD (Chicago: Franciscan Press, 1982).
12. See *Summa theologiae*, IIa. IIae., q. 27, a. 1, 3, 4, 5; Ia., q. 8, a. 3.
13. Sr. Madeline of St. Joseph, *Within the Castle with St. Teresa of Avila*, pp. 38, 80; see also *Summa theologiae*, IIa. IIae., q. 24, a. 2.
14. Augustine DiNoia, O.P., *Theological Formation Program, Dominican House of Studies, Washington, DC, 1998*, Lecture no. 10. See also St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Ia., q. 1, a. 5 ad 2.
15. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Ia., q. 1, a. 1.
16. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, IV, 42.
17. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. with appendices by Thomas Gilby, O.P. (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1963), Appendix 10, p. 124.
18. Reginald M. Coffey, O.P., *The Man from Rocca Sicca* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1942), p. 123.

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